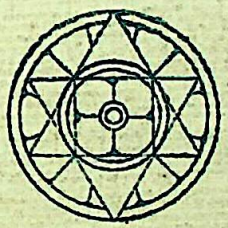
The New Age

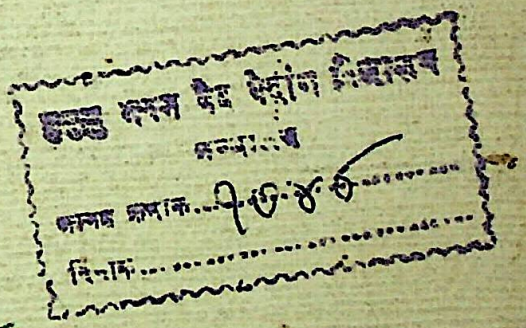
SPEECHES AT

THE SEMINARS AND THE CONFERENCES OF

The New Age association



Δ2xM72:g
L7

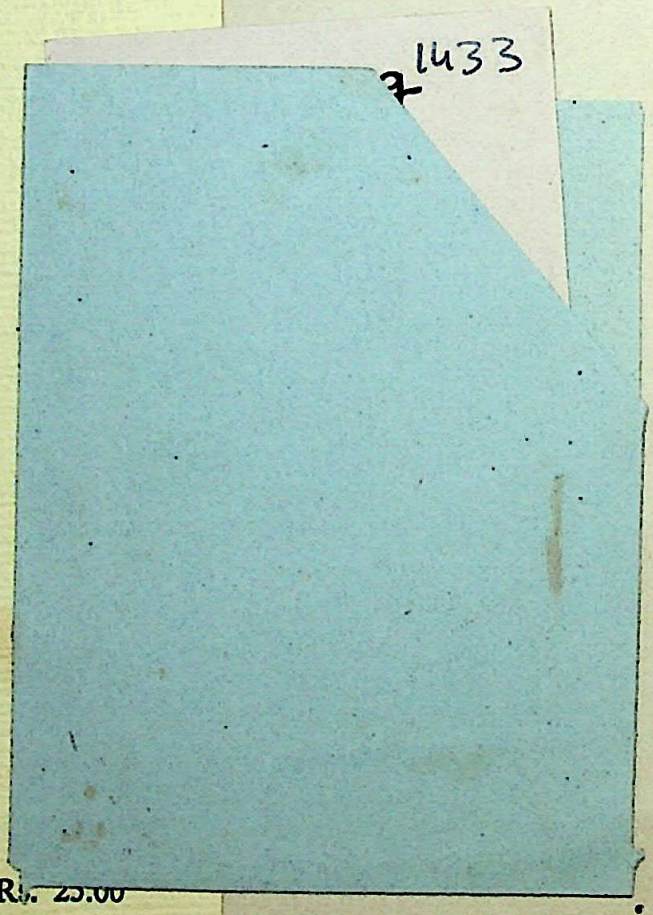


EDITED BY

Kishor Gandhi

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
OF EDUCATION - PONDICHERRY

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri



Rs. 25.00

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Δ2xM72:g
L7

1433

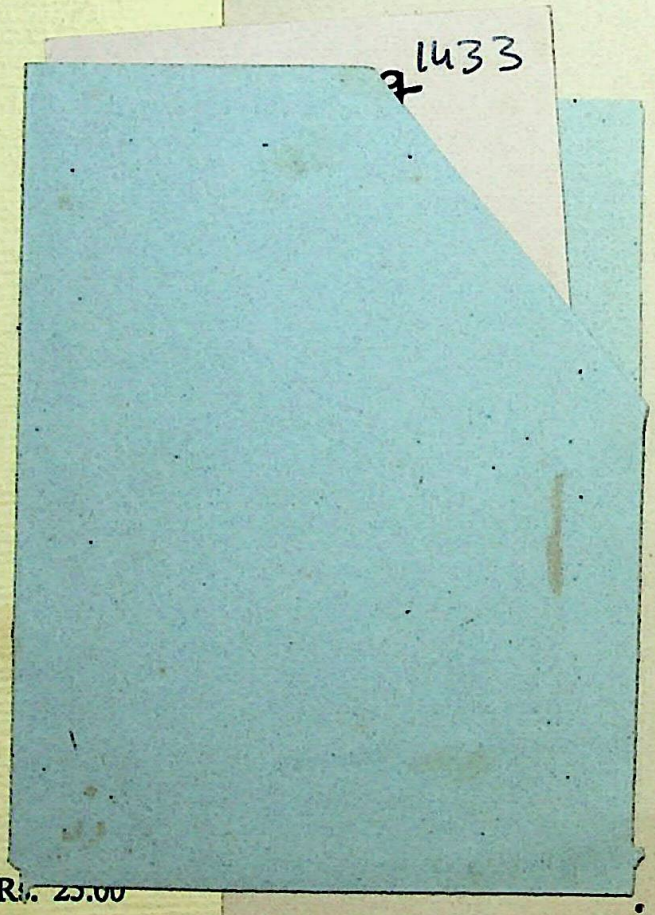
कृपया यह ग्रन्थ नीचे निर्देशित तिथि के पूर्व अथवा उक्त तिथि तक वापस कर दें। विलम्ब से लौटाने पर प्रतिदिन दस पैसे विलम्ब शुल्क देना होगा।

मुमुक्षु भवन वेद वेदाङ्ग पुस्तकालय, वाराणसी।

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri



1433



Rs. 25.00

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Δ2xM72:g
L7
1433

THE NEW AGE

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The New Age

SPEECHES AT

THE SEMINARS AND THE CONFERENCES OF

The New Age association

EDITED BY

Kishor Gandhi

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
OF EDUCATION - PONDICHERRY

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

First Edition : 1977

A2 x M'72:9
L7

❀ मुमुक्षु भवन वेद वेदाङ्ग पुस्तकालय ❀
वा रा ण सी ।
आगत क्रमांक..... 1433 .....
दिनांक.....4/12/80 .....

© Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 1977
Published by Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry
Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry
PRINTED IN INDIA

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

To

SRI AUROBINDO

and

THE MOTHER

in endless gratitude

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri



THE MOTHER : 15 August 1964

This photograph of the Mother, chosen by Her, presides over all the Seminars and Conferences of the New Age Association.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

PREFACE

In the middle of June 1964 an intimation came with a special intensity to form an association of the students of the Higher Course of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education with the central aim of giving an effective response to the Mother's repeated calls for collaboration with the working of the newly emergent forces released in the earth-atmosphere as a result of the manifestation of the supramental Truth in February 1956. Prompted by this intimation a proposal was made to the Mother which she readily accepted and advised to form the association on a voluntary basis. An appropriate name for the association had then to be found. After some pondering over it the name, "The New Age Association", came very clearly and when proposed to the Mother she immediately agreed to it.

The project was then explained to all the then students of the Higher Course in a series of meetings. All of them responded enthusiastically and joined as members. A complete list of all the members was then prepared on 3 July 1964 and presented to the Mother for her blessings. She gave her blessings to all the members.

In consultation with the Mother it was decided to hold the Inaugural Session of the Association on 12 July 1964. The Mother gave a special message for the occasion which was read out at the Session. In his Inaugural Speech at this Session Kishor Gandhi explained at some length the aims of the Association and the initial programme of activities which was to be undertaken to fulfil them.

The proceedings of this Inaugural Session were conducted in a solemn spirit appropriate to the high aim which had inspired the formation of the Association. This solemnity was greatly enhanced by the installation, on a beautifully decorated dais, of the Mother's Throne and her Sandles which she had kindly given for the occasion. During the whole Session the atmosphere was intensely surcharged with the radiant Presence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It was indeed a marvellous experience for all who attended this Session.

As stated in the Inaugural Speech the programme of initial activities to be undertaken by the Association was the holding of periodical Seminars and Conferences with the purpose of promoting an intensive study of all problems of human thought and life in the light of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision of the New Age.

Since all the activities of the Association were to be carried out under the direct guidance of the Mother, her instructions were asked for continuously in all matters and she gave them unfailingly. Regarding the inter-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

vals at which the Seminars were to be held she directed "4 times a year, nearby the darshan days". She also advised that in organising the Seminars the principle to be followed should be: "A free talk where each one is able to express what he thinks or feels".

For each Seminar a subject was fixed which was circulated among the members so that those who wanted to speak on it could study it intensively and prepare their papers. For some of the Seminars the Mother herself gave the subjects. For others a list of subjects were submitted to her out of which she selected one or two. In a few cases only one subject was proposed which she either approved or, when she did not like it, gave another one.

When the subject was in the form of a question, she also gave her own answer to it for reading it out at the Seminar. When it was not in the form of a question, some questions relating to it were put to her, to which she gave her answers in her own hand. Most of these are reproduced in facsimile at the beginning of each Seminar in this volume.

The most appropriate passages from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother relating to the subject of each Seminar were selected and shown to the Mother for her perusal and approval before they were read out at the Seminar. Many of these were read by her before giving her approval and in some cases she also gave her own remarks on them. These too are reproduced at the end of the speeches in each Seminar under the title "Readings".

For the Annual Conferences, held around the 15th August each year, a somewhat different procedure was adopted. Instead of fixing one subject for all the speakers as in the case of the Seminars, each of the participating members at the Conference was allowed to choose his own subject. For the Seventh Conference however only one subject was chosen and for the Ninth Conference the Mother herself specially gave one subject as it was held to celebrate Sri Aurobindo's Birth Centenary.

The date, the time and the place of each Seminar and Conference were always fixed after prior approval of the Mother. Also a list of all the participating speakers at each Seminar and Conference was regularly sent to her for approval and blessings.

In addition to these main directions which the Mother regularly gave there were several other matters regarding which her guidance was continuously sought so that all the activities of the Association might strictly conform to her Will. These are too many to be mentioned here. Only one may be cited as an example.

In October 1967, some members of the Association who wanted to participate in the Seminars said that they found it difficult to do so because of mental inertia or because they felt shy or nervous to speak before an audience. These difficulties were referred to the Mother and she was asked

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to give her advice in the matter. She gave the following answer written in her own hand:

"The chief meaning of this kind of activity is just to solve the difficulties they speak of — inertia, shyness, laziness, etc., etc.

"And it is just for that I asked you to do it 4 times a year.

"The students are not here to have an easy life but to prepare themselves for the Divine Life.

"How can they expect to get ready if they shun an effort, remain lazy and 'tamasic' ?" (30. 10. 1967)

After the Inaugural Session, it was arranged, with the Mother's approval, to publish some of the speeches delivered at the Seminars and the Conferences in *Mother India*, the monthly review of culture published from the Ashram. Commencing from August 1964, these speeches have appeared in it regularly in serial monthly instalments for over six years. After that their publication in *Mother India* became intermittent and sparse, with the result that quite a large number of them have remained unpublished. The members themselves who had delivered the speeches had not always cared to preserve them, so that some of these unpublished speeches were not available for inclusion in this volume. It is for this reason that in the case of some Seminars and Conferences it has been possible to mention only the subjects and the Mother's answers relating to them. However this volume contains most of the important speeches and can be treated as a representative collection of them.

After nine years of this continuous work among the students of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, it was thought fit to extend the activities of the New Age Association to the youth of India and abroad. When this idea was proposed to the Mother she enthusiastically commended it and some experimental work in this direction was done. But for the rest it has remained a project of the future.

We are exceedingly happy to bring out this volume in this year of the Mother's Birth Centenary, in grateful remembrance of the continuous personal interest she took in the work of this Association and all the abundant Grace which she unfailingly showered on it, because of which alone it has been possible to continue its activities uninterruptedly. Even after her physical withdrawal in November 1973, her help and guidance are concretely with us and relying on them the New Age Association continues its work as before.

We express our appreciation for the grant made available to our Centre of Education by the Government of India to meet the printing expenses of this volume.

THE EDITOR

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CONTENTS

PREFACE ... vii

INAUGURAL SESSION : 12 JULY 1964

The Mother's Message ... 1
Inaugural Speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 3
A Short Speech by Vijay Poddar ... 10
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 11

PART ONE

SEMINARS

FIRST SEMINAR : 9 AUGUST 1964

"What is the best way of surmounting the ordinary mental activity?"

The Mother's Answer ... 15
Introductory remarks by Kishor Gandhi ... 17
Speeches by Amita Sen ... 17
Arati Das Gupta ... 19
Bibhash Jyoti Mutsuddi ... 20
Brajkishore Singh ... 23
Debranjan Chatterji ... 24
Manoj Das Gupta ... 25
Paru Patil ... 28
Romen Palit ... 30
Manjula Sen ... 32
Sumita Chakravarti ... 36
Tarun Banerji ... 38
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 39

SECOND SEMINAR : 22 NOVEMBER 1964

"How to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life"

The Mother's Answer ... 41
Introductory remarks by Kishor Gandhi ... 43
Speeches by Amita Sen ... 44
Chanda Poddar ... 45
Debranjan Chatterji ... 48

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Manoj Das Gupta ... 49
Mita Chakravarti ... 51
Mona Sarkar ... 52
Oscar Lässer ... 56
Romen Palit ... 60
Manjula Sen ... 62
Selvi Siva ... 67
Shobha Mitra ... 68
Tarun Banerji ... 69

THIRD SEMINAR : 14 FEBRUARY 1965

"How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action?"

The Mother's Answer ... 73
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 75
Speeches by Amita Sen ... 76
Brajkishore Singh ... 77
Manoj Das Gupta ... 79
Mita Chakravarti ... 82
Prithwindra Mukherjee ... 84
Romen Palit ... 86
Manjula Sen ... 88
Rukiya Dalal ... 92
Selvi Siva ... 93
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 94

FOURTH SEMINAR : 25 APRIL 1965

"How to make one's studies a means of one's sadhana?"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 99
Speeches by Amita Sen ... 101
Baren Ghosh ... 102
Brajkishore Singh ... 104
Prakash Patel ... 105
Romen Palit ... 107
Oscar Lässer ... 109
Manjula Sen ... 114
Swadesh Chatterji ... 117
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 119

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIFTH SEMINAR : 8 AUGUST 1965

"How to turn one's difficulties into opportunities for progress?"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 123
Speeches by Shobha Mitra ... 125
Rukiya Dalal ... 127
Manjula Sen ... 129
Romen Palit ... 133
Mita Chakravarti ... 135
Brajkishore Singh ... 138
Oscar Lässer ... 140
Amita Sen ... 145
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 147

SIXTH SEMINAR : 21 NOVEMBER 1965

1. *"What is the best way of making humanity progress?"*
2. *"What is true freedom and how to attain it?"*

The Mother's Answers ... 151
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 153
Speeches by Swadesh Chatterji ... 157
Manjula Sen ... 158
Romen Palit ... 164
Mita Chakravarti ... 167
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 170

SEVENTH SEMINAR : 20 FEBRUARY 1966

"How to serve the Truth?"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 175
Speeches by Brajkishore Singh ... 178
Romen Palit ... 179
Manjula Sen ... 181
Srijit Bhattacharya ... 186
Tarun Banerji ... 188
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 189

EIGHTH SEMINAR : 14 AUGUST 1966

"What is the destiny of Man?"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 193
Speeches by Manoj Das Gupta ... 197

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Prithwindra Mukherjee ... 200
Oscar Lässer ... 202
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 206

NINTH SEMINAR : 27 NOVEMBER 1966
"What is true love and how to find it ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 211
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 213
Speeches by Baren Ghosh ... 215
Manjula Sen ... 217
Romen Palit ... 222
Shobha Mitra ... 227
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 228

TENTH SEMINAR : 19 FEBRUARY 1967
"Why is the Choice imperative ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 233
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 235
Speeches by Romen Palit ... 238
Srijit Bhattacharya ... 243
Swadesh Chatterji ... 244
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 246

ELEVENTH SEMINAR : 30 APRIL 1967
"What is the need of the hour ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 249
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 251
Speeches by Amita Sen ... 254
Ananda Reddy ... 255
Romen Palit ... 257
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 261

TWELFTH SEMINAR : 13 AUGUST 1967
"Sri Aurobindo and the New Age"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 265
Speeches by Oscar Lässer ... 273
Romen Palit ... 277
Readings from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo ... 280

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THIRTEENTH SEMINAR : 26 NOVEMBER 1967

"The new outlook on education."

The Mother's Answer ... 285
Speeches by Manjula Sen ... 287
Swadesh Chatterji ... 292
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 295

FOURTEENTH SEMINAR : 25 FEBRUARY 1968

"What we expect from the Mother ?"

The Mother's Answers ... 301
Speeches by Debranjan Chatterji ... 303
Manoj Das Gupta ... 304
Mita Chakravarti ... 305
Shobha Mitra ... 306
Reading of three Poems on The Mother by Arjava (J. A. Chadwick) and Romen Palit ... 308
Readings from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo ... 310

FIFTEENTH SEMINAR : 28 APRIL 1968

1. *"How to remain young ?"*
2. *"What is the secret of perpetual progress ?"*

The Mother's Answers ... 315
Speeches by Nanda Reddy ... 317
Henning Christensen ... 319
Debranjan Chatterji ... 322
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 323

SIXTEENTH SEMINAR : 23 FEBRUARY 1969

1. *"The god of the religions and the ONE Divine."*
2. *"Asceticism and true austerity."*

The Mother's Answers ... 327
Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 329
Speeches by Debranjan Chatterji ... 330
Henning Christensen ... 335
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 340

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SEVENTEENTH SEMINAR : 27 APRIL 1969

1. "Why is our yoga an adventure ?"
2. "The power of faith."

The Mother's Answers ... 345
Speech by Surendra Chauhan ... 347
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 349

EIGHTEENTH SEMINAR : 23 NOVEMBER 1969

"The salvation of the world lies in union and harmony. How do you conceive this union and this harmony ?"

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 355
Speech by Debranjan Chatterji ... 356
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 361

NINETEENTH SEMINAR : 22 FEBRUARY 1970

"What is the big change for which the world is preparing ? How can one help it ?"

The Mother's Answers ... 365
Speeches by Romen Palit ... 367
Basabjit Deshmukh ... 370
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 372

TWENTIETH SEMINAR : 26 APRIL 1970

"Is the aim of life to be happy ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 377
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 379

TWENTY-FIRST SEMINAR : 21 NOVEMBER 1970

"The solution of the world's problems lies in a change of consciousness. What is your conception of this change and how to bring it about ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 381
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 383

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-SECOND SEMINAR : 28 FEBRUARY 1971

"How to take a leap towards the future ?"

The Mother's Answers ... 387
Readings from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo ... 389

TWENTY-THIRD SEMINAR : 25 APRIL 1971

"What is our ideal of integral perfection ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 391
Readings from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo ... 393

TWENTY-FOURTH SEMINAR : 28 NOVEMBER 1971

"Sri Aurobindo's call to the youth."

The Mother's Answer ... 397
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 399

TWENTY-FIFTH SEMINAR : 27 FEBRUARY 1972

"How to be worthy of Sri Aurobindo's Centenary ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 403
Readings from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo ... 405

TWENTY-SIXTH SEMINAR : 23 APRIL 1972

"Education and Yoga."

The Mother's Answer ... 411

TWENTY-SEVENTH SEMINAR : 25 FEBRUARY 1973

"How to collaborate in all sincerity in showing to the world that man can be a true servant of the Divine ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 413
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 415

TWENTY-EIGHTH SEMINAR : 22 APRIL 1973

"How to reconcile the individual's claim for freedom with the collectivity's need for unity and order ?"

The Mother's Answer ... 417
Reading from Sri Aurobindo ... 419

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-NINTH SEMINAR : 24 FEBRUARY 1974

"Science, Reason and Yoga."

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 423
Speeches by Maurice Shukla ... 424
Sachchidananda Mohanty ... 431
Minoti Mohanty ... 436
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 440

THIRTIETH SEMINAR : 21 APRIL 1974

"Importance of the Individual."

Introductory speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 451
Speeches by Maurice Shukla ... 453
Sachchidananda Mohanty ... 459
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 464

PART TWO

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 6 SEPTEMBER 1964

The Second Advent of Sri Aurobindo
Speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 471
The Foundations of the New Age
Speech by Vijay Poddar ... 478
Life in the New Age
Speech by Debranjan Chatterji ... 482
Sri Aurobindo, The Poet of the New Age
Speech by Romen Palit ... 487
India, The Leader of the New World
Speech by Tarini Patil ... 496
Reading from Sri Aurobindo —
"The Divine Superman" ... 501

SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 12 SEPTEMBER 1965

Will the New Creation be Preceded by Destruction ?
Speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 507
Wealth and Yoga
Speech by Prakash Patel ... 513

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Reading from Sri Aurobindo —
"The Supramental Yoga" ... 518

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 11 SEPTEMBER 1966

The Mother and Her Mission on Earth
Speech by Manjula Sen ... 523
Readings from Sri Aurobindo —
"The Master's Way of Working" ... 539
"The Supramental Perfection" ... 541

FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 10 SEPTEMBER 1967

The Mother's Message ... 547
What is Death ?
Speech by Manjula Sen ... 549
The Ideal of Economics in the New Age
Speech by Abhijit Gupta ... 559
Creatrix of a New Age
Speech by Romen Palit ... 562
Readings from Sri Aurobindo —
"The Delight of Works" ... 567
Poems on Sri Aurobindo and on the Mother
by Arjava (J. A. Chadwick), K. D. Sethna,
Romen Palit and Nirodbaran ... 570

FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 16 AUGUST 1968

The True Meaning of Karma
Speech by Tarun Vishnu Chowdhury ... 579
Art and Yoga
Speech by Romen Palit ... 581
How to Know and Express the Truth ?
Speech by Henning Christensen ... 585
Readings from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ... 588

SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 17 AUGUST 1969

The Mother's Message ... 591

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 16 AUGUST 1970

"India of Sri Aurobindo's Dream".

The Mother's Answer ... 593
Readings from Sri Aurobindo ... 595

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 22 AUGUST 1971

The Mother's Message ... 603
Reading from Sri Aurobindo —
"A God's Labour" ... 605

NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE : 12 AUGUST 1972

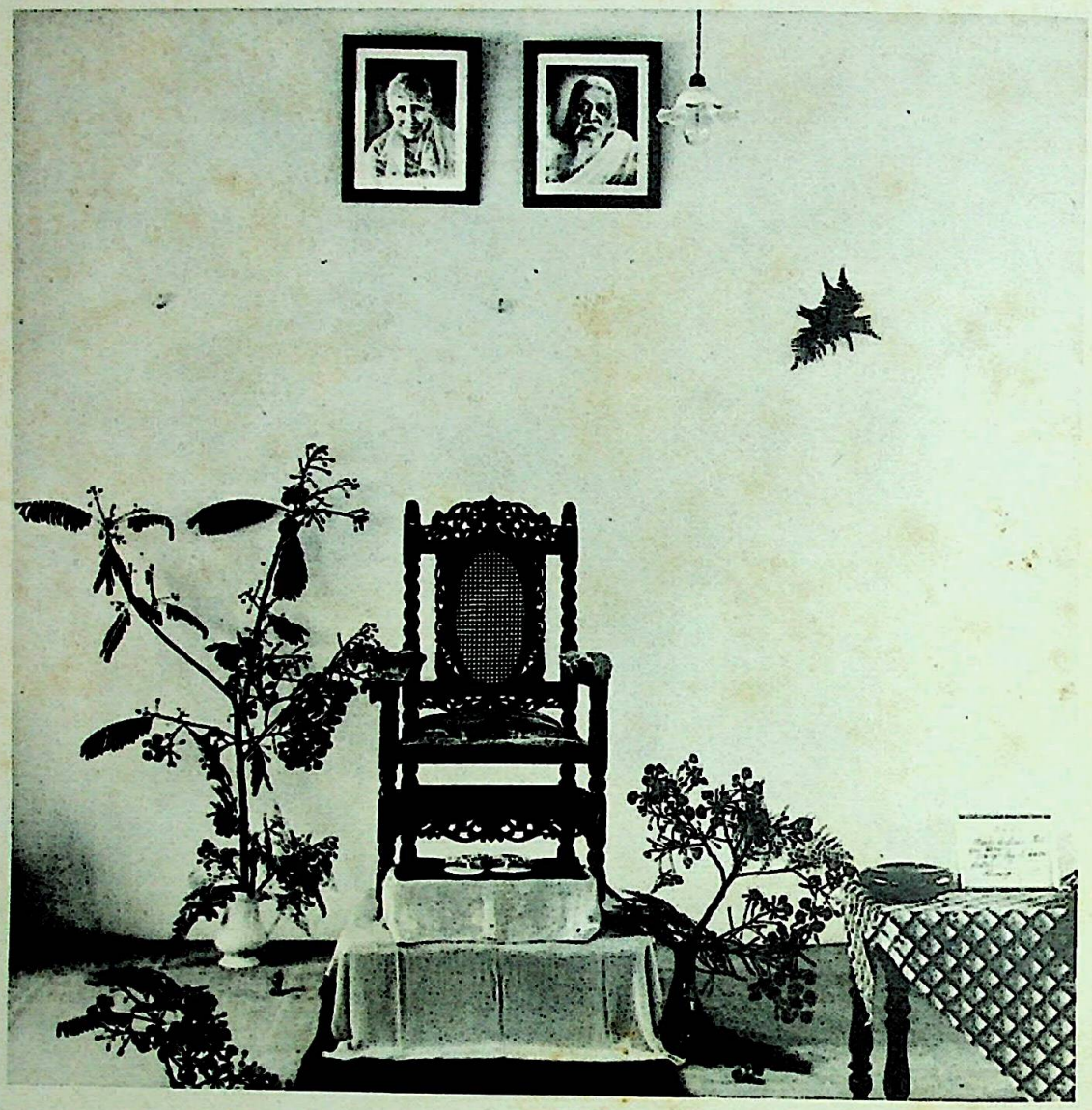
(In celebration of Sri Aurobindo's Birth Centenary)

"Sri Aurobindo Reveals the Future"

The Mother's Answer ... 609
Introductory Speech by Kishor Gandhi ... 611
The Spiritual Revolution
Speech by Anand Arya ... 612
The Future World Unity
Speech by Maria Jain ... 615
Man and Woman in the New Age
Speech by Romen Palit ... 620
Reading from Sri Aurobindo —
"The Supramental Manifestation" ... 625

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri



THE INAUGURAL SESSION

12 July 1964

The Mother's Throne and Sandles are installed on the dais.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

INAUGURAL SESSION

12 July 1964

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE:

12.7.64

Never believe that
you know.
Always try to know
better.

blessings

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

INAUGURAL SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

Our Aims and Programme

At the commencement of the New Age Association which we have formed I propose to make a brief statement of our aims and programme so that we may know precisely why we have formed it and what will be the plan of our activities.

The central aim which has inspired the formation of this Association is to meet the most urgent need of the present hour which is of crucial significance for the whole human race. During the last few years, as you know, the Mother has been insistently drawing our pointed attention to the exceptional importance of the present moment in the earth's history. She has said:

"There are, in the history of the earth, moments of transition when things that have been for thousands of years must give place to things that are about to manifest. A special concentration of the world consciousness, one might almost say, an intensification of its effort, happens at such times, varying according to the kind of progress to be made, the quality of the transformation to be realised. We are precisely at such a turning of the world's history. As Nature has already created upon earth a mental being, even so, there is now a concentrated activity to bring forth in this mentality a supramental consciousness and individuality."[1]

This importance of the present hour in the world's history has a special significance for our Ashram because Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have founded it with the sole purpose of forming a representative group of the whole humanity which will be the first to receive the supramental consciousness and to create the first beings of the New Race. That is the reason why the Mother has declared: "The Ashram has been founded and is meant to be the cradle of the new world."[2]

The Centre of Education has also been formed by the Mother for the same purpose, as is clear from her Inaugural Message to the Founding Convention of the Centre of Education held on 24.4.1951. Let us recollect her own words:

"Sri Aurobindo is present in our midst, and with all the power of his creative genius he presides over the formation of the university centre which for years he considered as one of the best means of preparing the future hu-

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1953, p. 73.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1964, p. 98.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

manity to receive the supramental light that will transform the élite of to-day into a new race manifesting upon earth the new light and force and life.

"In his name I open to-day this convention meeting here with the purpose of realising one of his most cherished ideals."[1]

It is for this reason that the present concentrated activity of the supramental consciousness which will create the New Race is centrally focussed on the Ashram and the Centre of Education. As the Mother has said, "We have here the peerless privilege of being at the very centre of the radiating light, at the source of the force of transformation."[2]

But that "peerless privilege" is also a great responsibility, for it demands of us that we at least should awaken to the supreme need of the hour, even though the rest of humanity still runs in its old meaningless and disastrous rounds and, entirely opening our whole being to the supramental consciousness, allow it to transform our life completely. This is our responsibility because it is the task which has been laid upon us as members of the Ashram and the Centre of Education, and if we do not discharge it to the best of our ability we cannot say that we have been faithful to the aim for which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have founded the Ashram and the Centre or to the call of our soul which has brought us here.

That supramental Truth which was formerly pressing from above to descend into the earth consciousness has in February 1956 globally manifested as a whole New World in the subtle inner atmosphere of the present world and has been standing very close to earth to come down into the external physical world. In the Mother's words:

"This wonderful world of delight
Waiting at our gates for our call,
To come down upon earth..."[3]

But now that New World is no more waiting but incessantly knocking at our gates to awaken us from our old-world torpor. If we still remain too deaf to listen to its knocking it will soon crash down our fast-closed gates and rush in with its overwhelming force to possess the earth. For the New Supramental World will no longer brook any resistance or recalcitrance of the old world; its light and power are now swiftly rising like a high tide which with its irresistible surging waves will break down every obstruction that stands in its way. It has waited long, far too long, for humanity to get ready to receive it willingly; now it is determined to come down and settle for ever

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1951, p. 38.
[2] *Ibid.*, November 1953, p. 73. [3] New Year Message, 1961.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

on earth whether humanity is willing to accept it or not.

We here in the Ashram have this special mission laid upon us that we at least should open our gates for the New World to enter in and, through us as a representative group of humanity, radiate its influence over the rest of the world.

Because the pressure of the New World is now becoming insistently imminent and because we can now ignore it only at our peril, the Mother gave us a call last year to prepare for it and has this year put us a question which is both a reminder and a warning: "*Are you ready?*"

Fundamentally, that readiness consists in our sincere, whole-hearted and conscious collaboration with the great creative forces of the Supramental World that are now incessantly working to initiate a New Age in the earth's history.

Of that collaboration there are two aspects—the individual and the collective. The individual aspect is a personal endeavour which each one has to carry out in his own way, in his own line of sadhana. But equally important is the collective aspect of this collaboration because without it the supramental Truth cannot create the New Age in the life of humanity. It is because of this special need of collective endeavour that the group-life of the Ashram has been formed.

The Centre of Education, as an integral part of the Ashram group-life, has its own distinct function in this collective endeavour of collaboration with the creative forces of the New Age. Being a distinct stratum of the organic group-life of the Ashram community it has a special role to play in the specific field of its activity.

We as students of this Centre must become fully conscious of our role and, taking full cognizance of the supreme opportunity given to us, must rise to the occasion at the present hour and fulfil Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's expectation of us to the best of our ability.

That is the central aim which has inspired the formation of the New Age Association at the present moment.

(2)

What is our special role as students of the Centre of Education in the great work that has now to be done at any cost? In our capacity as students, it can be mainly in the field of study and education. But we have always to remember that the aim of our study here is radically different from the usual aims followed by other educational institutions. This difference cannot be more effectively stated than in the Mother's own words:

"We are not here to do (only a little better) what others do.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"We are here to do what the others cannot do because they do not have even the idea that it can be done.

"We are here to open the way of the Future to children who belong to the Future.

"Anything else is not worth the trouble and not worthy of Sri Aurobindo's help."[1] (6.9.1961)

At another place the Mother has explained in some more detail the difference between the spirit in which we ought to conduct our studies here and the motives with which the students in the outside world pursue their studies. Let me read out her own words:

Why are Diplomas and Certificates not Given to the Students of the Centre of Education?

"For about a century mankind is suffering from a disease which seems to be spreading more and more, and in our days, it has become most acute, it is what we may call 'utilitarianism'. Things and persons, circumstances and activities seem to be viewed and appreciated exclusively from this angle alone. Nothing has any value unless it is useful. It goes, of course, without saying that what is useful is better than what is not so. But one must first of all understand what one calls useful — useful to whom, to what, for what?

"Indeed more and more, the races who considered themselves civilised have been naming as useful that which serves to bring, to acquire or to produce money. Everything is judged from this monetary angle. That is what I call utilitarianism. And this disease is very contagious, for even children do not escape from it. At an age when one should have dreams of beauty and greatness and perfection, perhaps too sublime for ordinary common sense, but certainly higher than this dull good sense, they dream of money and worry how to earn it.

"So when they think of their studies they think above all of what can be useful to them, so that later on when they grow up, they can earn a great deal of money.

"And the thing that becomes most important for them is to prepare to pass examinations with success; for it is with diplomas and certificates and titles that they will be able to get good positions and earn much.

"For them study has no other purpose, no other interest.

"To learn in order to know, to study in order to have the knowledge of the secrets of Nature and of life, to educate oneself in order to increase one's consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to be master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, one's incapacity and ignorance, to prepare oneself

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1961, p.18.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

in order to progress in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true ... they hardly think of that and consider all that as mere utopia, the only important thing is to be practical, to prepare and to learn how to earn money.

"Children who are affected with this disease are not in their place in the Centre of Education of the Ashram. And it is to demonstrate this to them that we do not prepare them for any official examination and competition and do not give them diplomas or titles which may serve them in the outside world.

"We want to have here only those who aspire for a higher and better life, who are eager for knowledge and perfection, who look ardently towards a more wholly true future."[1] (17.7.1960)

You will notice from the passages that I have read how emphatic the Mother is in stressing our own distinctive attitude in the field of education and in warning us to keep away from the outside influences of the present world.

I have utilised this occasion to draw your pointed attention to these ideals which the Mother has given us to follow in order that in whatever activities we may undertake, we may never lose sight of them. I thought it necessary to state them because it is only in the context and framework of these ideals that we can define the more specific aim and programme of the New Age Association that we have now formed.

(3)

This specific aim cannot be better expressed than in the Mother's own words in the Message she has specially given for our Inaugural Session:

12.7.64
"Never believe that you know.
Always try to know better."

As students of the Higher and the Advanced Courses we have been studying the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother over a number of years and so we may have a belief that we know their teachings. The Mother, however, advises us not to entertain such a belief; she would rather want us to keep our zest for learning ever more keen and intense.

What the Mother says applies to all knowledge but it applies with special force to the knowledge contained in Sri Aurobindo's and her writings. About Sri Aurobindo's writings, you will surely remember what she has said:

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), pp. 106-107.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme."[1]

Though expressed in intellectual terms, his writings are not the products of the intellect, even of the widest and loftiest intellect. They are pregnant with measureless depths of light, they are inexhaustible treasures of truth, they are endless vistas of highest knowledge which we can go on exploring for ever.

Because of this, to entertain any belief that we know what Sri Aurobindo's writings contain after some acquaintance with them is simply a sign of our incomprehension. Even a deep and thorough study of Sri Aurobindo's writings should never give us that belief, for we can be sure that they will always contain depths of knowledge infinitely greater than what we could ever compass with our finite understanding. So if we call ourselves students of Sri Aurobindo's writings we cannot truly say that we have completed our study of them after finishing the courses of study prescribed for them in the normal curriculum. In fact, even for the most earnest student it is not possible to have anything more than a superficial and sketchy study of Sri Aurobindo's works within the limits of this curriculum because he has to finish them within a very limited number of periods alloted to them and also because he has to attend to a number of other subjects which take away most of his time of study.

This surely is a very unsatisfactory situation because the Mother has not started this Centre of Education for mere academic studies as in other educational institutions. Surely we have to include all branches of knowledge in our curriculum but we should never forget that we have to pursue them in the light of the central vision of Sri Aurobindo's system of knowledge. Otherwise our studies will get out of focus, we shall lose our true perspective, get side-tracked and even lost in the endless mazes of the teeming proliferation of modern knowledge. This insistence on the need of keeping a firm grasp on Sri Aurobindo's central vision does not really amount to any narrowing of our scope of knowledge within fixed bounds because that vision is so vast and synthetic that it can embrace in its range all the developments of human knowledge, past and present, and give to each of them its proper place and right significance in a total integral harmony. Not only so but all the past and present branches of knowledge can find in his vision ample scope for new orientations for their future developments in the as yet unknown terrains of truth.

So we need have no hesitation to extend our scope of studies in all directions; but we have to be careful to make first our foundation firm and secure, because if it is shaky and uncertain we shall lose our moorings and will not

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, April 1961, p. 161.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

be able to assimilate effectively for our true growth the vast flood of modern knowledge rushing upon us from all sides. A clear and secure understanding of Sri Aurobindo's central teachings is essential as a solid foundation upon which we can build the whole edifice and superstructure of all other knowledge.

(4)

But to have a firm grounding in Sri Aurobindo's works is not an easy task. It needs an exceptional capacity of mind and a very austere mental discipline, of which all are not capable. It also needs a keen and living enthusiasm and a tireless zest for studying Sri Aurobindo's thought which all may not feel. But there may be some who do feel this enthusiasm and zest because Sri Aurobindo's thought has become for them a mental passion which drives them incessantly, and the high and severe austerity demanded to study it fills their heart with a boundless joy of adventure.

It is for this reason that we have kept the membership of the New Age Association on an entirely voluntary basis. The Association is meant only for those who feel that they can never know Sri Aurobindo's thought enough, and who feel an irresistible urge to know more and more of it. Those others who feel that what they have studied in the normal courses provided for Sri Aurobindo's studies in our present curriculum is enough for them may not find their joining the Association helpful. So it is left to their choice whether they join or not.

Even for those who join the Association it is necessary to bear in mind that a mere mental study of Sri Aurobindo's thought by itself is not enough for the central aim for which the Association has been formed and which I have already explained at the outset. But done in the right spirit and in the right attitude it can be a very great help in realising that aim. The situation in this case is the same as in the case of physical culture activities that we do in the Ashram. By themselves physical exercises, games and sports can give us only a healthy body. But here in our Ashram we do them for an exceedingly higher purpose. For, as the Mother has repeatedly declared, physical activities if done in the right consciousness and in the right spirit can be a very powerful means of opening the physical consciousness and the body to the supramental Force. So also mental studies, especially of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, if pursued in the right spirit can be a potent means for opening our minds to the supramental Light and Knowledge that have now manifested in the earth-consciousness, and for making our mental faculties fit instruments for their expression through our thought and speech.

This can be done individually also, but if done on a collective scale, as we propose to do in our Association, it will create a general mental atmosphere surcharged with the vibrations of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

supramental Light. That Light is already there in and around our Centre of Education, but if we consciously open to it, it will fill our minds and lives with its white-gold illumination.

(5)

These, in brief outline, are our main aims. Regarding our programme, it is not our intention to have any elaborate mentally preconceived plan of activities at the beginning. Rather we propose to begin on a small scale with a few activities and then let them grow in a spontaneous living manner out of our own experience.

The activities that we initially propose to undertake, and which the Mother has already approved, are the following:

(1) To hold regular periodical Seminars which will provide opportunities for free talks where each one is able to express what he thinks and feels. This will impart necessary training to the members to prepare papers and deliver speeches of a high quality for which there is a great need for the right kind of propagation of our ideals in the outside world.

(2) To hold Annual Conferences on a date around the 15th August every year.

This is our present programme. But we do not propose to limit ourselves to it. All other activities which will promote our aims we shall undertake in future.

The last thing I wish to say is that in all matters, either big or apparently small, we shall ask for the Mother's directions and carry them out scrupulously. We hope that the Power that has inspired the formation of this Association will guide us at every step and help us to answer adequately the Mother's call for making ourselves ready for the New Age, the advent of which is imminent.

A SHORT SPEECH BY VIJAY PODDAR

I am here to give a short speech and it shall indeed be short. I do not know how to inspire you for the way ahead, and all that I can do is to try and express my own personal feelings towards this attempt.

We celebrate today the birth of an Association, but we celebrate still more the resolve to participate in the New Age. We are the members of this

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

unique Centre of Education, and it is our privilege, nay, our sacred duty, to create and to live in an atmosphere vibrant with the thought and the presence of Sri Aurobindo. We must provide the torch that shall light the world, the example that shall inspire, the centre that shall radiate in its purity the light and the force of the Master.

This is our first attempt, as students of this Centre, to strive collectively towards this goal, to fuse into one our individual aspirations. What we seek is first a mental understanding but also a dynamic effectuation in our lives. We do not know the future; we do not know for certain the path we shall follow, nor how we shall expand and grow; we do not know the difficulties that lie on the way. But one thing we do know, that it is the Mother who directly and puissantly guides us and leads us, and in whose hands we place ourselves with a child-like and care-free abandon. It is she who shall mould us and carry us through all difficulties, and therefore we are certain of our goal.

But we must take the resolution and embark on the way. The outcome of our endeavour is in her hands, but the value and the success of our effor will depend on the zeal and the enthusiasm we bring to our task, the sincerity, the courage, the faith, and the hope with which we look towards the future.

Yes, it is faith that is needed, faith in our ideal, faith in our purpose, and sincerity in our endeavour. Then the Grace and the Blessings of the Mother are with us, and we can march securely on our way.

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Greatest Boon

"The boon that we have asked from the Supreme is the greatest that the Earth can ask from the Highest, the change that is most difficult to realise, the most exacting in its conditions. It is nothing less than the descent of the supreme Truth and Power into Matter, the supramental established in the material plane and consciousness and the material world and an integral transformation down to the very principle of Matter. Only a supreme Grace can effect this miracle.

"The supreme Power has descended into the most material consciousness but it has stood there behind the density of the physical veil, demanding before manifestation, before its great open workings can begin, that the conditions of the supreme Grace shall be there, real and effective.

"A total surrender, an exclusive self-opening to the divine influence, a constant and integral choice of the Truth and rejection of the falsehood, these

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

are the only conditions made. But these must be fulfilled entirely, without reserve, without any evasion or pretence, simply and sincerely down to the most physical consciousness and its workings."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 46.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

PART ONE

Seminars

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

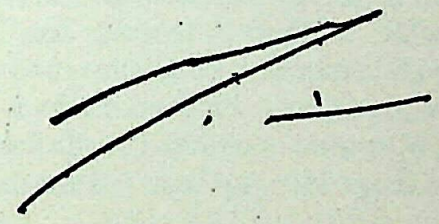
CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIRST SEMINAR

9 August 1964

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:

What is the best way
of surmounting the
ordinary mental activity?



"What is the best way of surmounting the ordinary mental activity?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

My answer

Keep silent.

"My answer: Keep silent."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY OF SURMOUNTING THE ORDINARY MENTAL ACTIVITY?

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY KISHOR GANDHI

On seeing the subject which the Mother has given for our first Seminar today, you must have noticed that in the question she has put she has drawn our pointed attention to the most important problem both in the practice of sadhana and in the pursuit of our education here.

The aim of both of these, which we try to realise here, is to raise our ordinary mental activity to a higher level of consciousness. But in doing so the most obstinate difficulty which we meet with is the restless, dispersed and wasteful activity of the ordinary mind. Unless this difficulty is decisively overcome it is impossible either to rise to a higher level of consciousness or to open our normal consciousness to that higher influence.

This difficulty is universal and the need to overcome it has been insisted upon by all the educational and spiritual disciplines. Different disciplines have prescribed different methods suitable to their aim and purpose.

In our yoga, of which our education forms a vital part, we do not insist upon any one set method which all are required to follow. We are given only general indications which each one has to adapt to the needs of his own peculiar nature and temperament.

So each one of us here who has tried to overcome the ordinary restless and confused mental activity must have found a way which seems to him the best.

In our Seminar this morning we shall hear from some members of our Association about the way which each one of them has found the most helpful. We shall listen to them with keen interest, and profit by what they have to say from their own experience.

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

It seems to me necessary first to define what I understand by "ordinary mental activity". It comprises, I think, not only the mechanical, recurring thoughts over which we have often no control, but also all that we arrive at by reason, by arguments and reflection. That is, the present organiser of our life.

I believe that the first step to surmount this activity is to feel the need of the change. It has two sides to it: first, a sense of insufficiency, of suffoca-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tion almost, because of the buzzing thoughts which lead us to an abiding incertitude; and then, the knowledge that there is something beyond, something that can adequately — if not for the better! — replace the guide we have. This last perception comes more easily if we have experienced moments when we have not depended on this mental activity and yet felt concretely that we exist.

The second step is controlling our thoughts and quietening our mind. We can start on this venture only when we have learnt to observe our own thoughts. They seem at first to flock into us from all directions, but with a little practice each individual usually finds a pattern in them and the way to bring them under control. One way might be to group them up in different categories and shelve them apart for the moment — as for example, thoughts on our daily work and activities, on people around us and everyday happenings, or it may simply be a flutter of mental restlessness. To arrive at a greater silence we may call for peace in the mind or stop the thoughts from entering us....However, once a relative calm is achieved — it becomes progressively more complete with practice and aspiration — we have to wait in that silence to receive whatever might take shape in the mind without our intervention. Here again individuals will differ and even the same person might have a different purpose when he is trying to silence his mind. The general aim is to go beyond the usual means of knowledge and get in touch with a surer guidance but on the whole the approach may be of two types: one is to aspire in that silence to hear the quiet voice of our soul which alone can replace these fruitless gropings; the other is to want the solution to a specific problem. We keep the question foremost in our consciousness and leave to a higher Power to give us the necessary indication. Of course, it is a tricky endeavour as long as we have not developed the right discernment, because we may dub as "higher indication" any odd preference we have.

The third step will be to make That, which we perceive as *above* the reason, the mover of all our every-day thought and action. Naturally we cannot give up reason overnight! It would be disastrous, because we might be misled by our vital fancy and want of discipline, by our mental rigidity or physical inertia. That is why along with the effort to perceive what is above the mind another work has to go on: that of knowing and disciplining our whole nature.

It is, as we all realise, a complex task and we can hope to achieve it only by the constant help of the Mother's Force and Guidance, which in their turn can become all-effective only when there is a perfect sincerity on our part.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY ARATI DAS GUPTA

Before discussing what is the best way of surmounting the ordinary mental activity we have first to understand and define what is meant by the ordinay mental activity, how it orginates and how it functions.

By ordinary mental activity I understand the activity of the physical and mechanical mind which spins and revolves often aimlessly around no central object. It goes on and on like the fly-wheel of a machine which, once set going, continues rotating by its own inertia of heavy mass. It is there constantly *en sourdine* even when we are preoccupied with other mental pursuits. Often a stray idea elbows its room through a huge variegated multitude of thoughts running riot, running cris-cross across the brain. Sometimes fag-ends of incoherent segmented thought, cutting one another at irregular intervals, build up an intricate superstructure of lattices, set in panes of lead-work, which weighs on the brain. This heavy construction of thoughts requires a great and powerful force, a proper lever with an appropriate fulcrum, for its uprooting.

Often again rambling errant thoughts prolong their sojourn in the mental sky. They interlace and intertwine to weave cobwebs and flimsy floating gossamers of messy thought stuff. A great patience and resourcefulness are required to clear the brain of this imperceptible thin network film.

How does all this originate in the brain? Well, every significant and insignificant opportunity is an occasion for its appearance. But in each case its existence exemplifies a lack of control over thoughts, an absence of a unifying central motive and behind it all a terrible mental inertia which lets things take their own shape and own course, and prevents the intervention of any higher harmonising factor.

This ordinary mental activity does not follow any systematic line of working. Its function is rather aimless, chaotic and whimsical. And far from being creative it is confusing and often destructive.

Now that we have seen, though very sketchily, what is meant by the ordinary mental activity, how it originates and functions, we are in a position to chalk out a plan of attack for the central problem of surmounting this activity.

The first essential requisite is to be fully conscious of its presence in our mind, to be aware of the fact that often when we are apparently preoccupied with systematic mental pursuits, this ordinary activity of the mind continues to hum and buzz and to push its way through the brain. The second step is to feel sincerely the necessity to overcome it. Once this necessity is felt intensely, half the work is done. The mind wakes up and shakes off its torpor and drowsiness and indifference. The various parts of the mental being now

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

stand in league against the tresspasser. No, its unlawful presence cannot be tolerated any more.

A prompt vigilance, seconded with a strong will-power, is another indispensable requisite to control and if necessary to reject any such incoherent and irrelevant thought wave, in its very process of elaboration. Here we could remember what the Mother says about the cultivation of the will. She writes:

"There is one important point you must know and never forget: the will can be cultivated and developed even like the muscles by methodical and progressive exercises. You must not shrink from demanding of your will the maximum effort even for a thing that appears to be of no importance; for it is by effort that capacity grows, acquiring little by little the power to apply itself even to the most difficult things."[1]

A will adamant and persevering is a puissant weapon against all aimless thought-activity and against all indulgence in it. Armed with such a will one can fight back all mental inertia, all indifference and negligence to establish peace and order in the mind.

To concentrate our mind on the highest ideal we have placed before us, to be fully preoccupied with the efforts to materialise this ideal in our life will help us a great deal in overcoming the ordinary mental activity. All our thoughts will gradually be canalised in one direction. There will be established thus a one-way traffic in the brain ensuring a greater control of thoughts and bringing down silence in the mind. It is a very effective and sure means in our pursuit to surmount the ordinary mental activity.

For us here, all children of the Mother, the spontaneous move will be to place the problem before her with the utmost simplicity and sincerity. To make her help and guidance most effective we have to grow conscious of her working in us. The steps mentioned above may help us, in our personal efforts to collaborate with her. The certitude of victory lies in our absolute faith in her patient and unfailing aid.

SPEECH BY BIBHASH JYOTI MUTSUDDI

My talk on this subject will be a very limited one. For I shall take up only one particular aspect of the mind's activity, namely, its faculty to doubt. And even here I shall limit myself to its atheistic bent. I shall deal mostly with its gross, obstinate and arrogant demand for the physical proof of God. So my talk will be extremely limited and one-sided. But, however limited

[1] *On Education* (1952), p. 35.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

it may be, I feel that it may show one of the many ways to overcome this particular activity of the mind.

I don't know if I shall make myself clear to you. In fact I have not endeavoured to do so. I have rather tried to put before you some suggestions hoping thereby that out of them you will be able to gather some idea as to what I want to convey to you.

This mind of ours which seems to guide our life at every step, how to make it come to realise that it is not really our true guide, that it cannot give us the ultimate truth? Here's the rub.

The negative aspect of the mental activity is to doubt. Often by doubting the mind becomes sure. Mind is, then, the helper. But if the mind is consistent in this line of its activity, let us see what happens. When we speak of God, it says: "God? Rubbish! If there is anything palpable and tangible in this world, it is the Devil. Evil and suffering overtop joy; Nature seems all a mere chance and accident or an indifferent and blind Force. God is only a chimera of the weaklings who need consolation, of the shrewd who desire to rule. They create a good, all-loving and all-punishing God to frighten the strong and unruly and the unintelligent, and also for the purpose of maintaining order and harmony in society. But, actually, God does not exist. He ceases to exist the moment the dreamer ceases to be. 'There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.' ' 'Tis in us that we are thus and thus', etc., etc." In this way our doubting mind goes on babbling, using much of its power (I was almost going to say, much of spiritual power) in reviling God. Some of these doubts, as you can see, raise deep philosophical issues, and have taxed the human mind ever since ethics came into being. I shall not call upon philosophy to answer them. (For, to be frank, I understand very little of philosophy.)

When such thoughts or doubts assail me, I simply demand one thing of my doubting mind, viz., that it should only be consistent and sincere in this its doubting activity. For then alone, I feel and think, it will come to know its flaws and shortcomings. Whenever we doubt the existence of God, we must be vigilant to see that our doubting mind does not deviate from its path of doubting. We must set it to that line and push it to its extreme point, so that it sees what is the ultimate outcome.

This is how I do it and argue against when my mind doubts the existence of God. I say: "When I go out of my room, does my mind doubt as to whether I may die in an accident on the road? No. When I am going through a coconut grove, does my mind doubt as to whether a coconut may fall upon my head and thus kill me, or shake into disorder the precious grey-cells of my brain? No. When I eat do I take the pains to verify whether there is poison or not? No. When I go to play I know that accidents may happen. But do I refrain from playing? No. I am speaking before you now, am I

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

doubting as to whether the ground will give way and, as a result, the ceiling may fall upon us and crush us all? No."

Why does our mind not doubt these things? One would probably say, because our mind, by a careful study and analysis of life, has come to infer that mishaps and accidents do not happen to man so easily. Hence we need not waste our energy in baseless imaginations and fears. This, to a certain extent, is true, no doubt. But I for one believe that this kind of reasoning cannot really eliminate the element of doubt. On the contrary, one might assert that one ought to doubt what we do not ordinarily doubt just because life does not so easily present mishaps and accidents.

No, doubt can be eliminated only by two methods: the first is to realise that it is possible to doubt everything, and consequently this would result in my cessation of work or the drying up of my *élan*, my urge or my enthusiasm for life. But those whose life-force is strong and powerful will not tolerate this cessation and drying up. Their solution would, then, be to set aside the doubting mind, to seal their ears against the worldly-wise warnings and cautions. It would be to return to impulse, instinct or the intuition that works in the life-force. That is why we find that some dynamic characters come to conceive of the life-impulse as Divinity and who may very well express themselves in the words of Hamlet:

> "...Rashly,
> And prais'd be rashness for it — let us know,
> Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
> When our deep plots do pall; and that should learn us
> There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."

But still this solution does not lead us out of the ordinary mentality. It has still the seed of the poisonous frustration which might once again bring us into the grip of doubt because it was not resolved but only set aside.

The real solution, then, — and this is the second alternative — is to seek true Knowledge, if such Knowledge exists; to be thoroughly sincere, and to pay any price that a pursuit of this Knowledge would demand of us. Indeed, there is a claim that true Knowledge is possible. And, if we are honest, it becomes imperative for us to hear the call, to set out on the Path however rugged it may be. This is the act which does not belong to the ordinary mentality. The ordinary mentality rests with doubting, and does not doubt sufficiently enough. It is not prepared to face the consequences of doubting. To doubt consistently, extremely, is to set out for an exploration. To explore is the solution of the doubt.

And yet mere exploration will not resolve the doubt. It will still remain

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

in the background. But then it is a virtue, a factor constituting the positivistic aspect of our mentality, which admits nothing but the Truth, the Truth verified by abiding experience. It is this abiding experience which is the true antidote to doubt. Where experience *is*, doubt *is not*. That is the final solution of doubt.

But even before this experience comes to us, seers come to our help on the Way, and open our eyes to "measureless sight":

"C'est en vain qu'on se met en defence:
Ce Dieu touche les cœurs lorsque moins on y pense."

Or

"Our reason cannot sound life's mighty sea"

but

"Our Minds are starters in the race of God."

Or

"Somewhere beyond the railroad
of reason, south or north,
lies a magnetic mountain
rivetting sky to earth."

Or

"The mind is a prison
with a high small window
barred against escape.

"A decoy of light enters there
reminding the tortured brain
that somewhere unseen the wide
Perception of the Sun's ways exists."

And lastly, and probably true to the spirit of the essay I end with a question:

"Is the Sun a Dream because there is Night?"

SPEECH BY BRAJKISHORE SINGH

By "ordinary mental activity" I understand what one might call "thinking

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

by habit". Some of its constituents are: comparison, judgment, generalisation, conclusion, that satisfy some set pattern in the mind. Its natural tones are: "I know it is like that! I knew it would be so! just wait and see! ..." It shows a deep and often aggressive faith in laws, particularly in the laws of human nature. It is a fatalist and a pessimist attitude of mind. It wisely reminds us of the nature of reality, explaining with illustrations what really happens at the end. Dreams cannot survive long in its company. It calculates meticulously for safety and takes no chances with the future. Even while it is considering present or future events, its real field is the past. It is happy only when it can keep the individual or the event tied to the past. It is by its very nature historical, claiming that it is, because it has been. It carries in it all the signs of an imminent death; yet even serious efforts to surmount it must have crumbled before its persistence.

Mental silence, I suppose, must be for most seekers a necessary training, before we can uproot our mind from the past and give it an upward and forward tension. We could then have glimpses of the future that must be throwing its beams, without finding a reflecting milieu .... Instead of this habitual turning to the past for reference, if we could realise that it is the Future that draws the chariot of Time, we would pass from the slave-habit of following limiting laws to the master-power of seeing and following in freedom. We would see to what the moment beckons us, see into the very being of events, and, in an intense identification with the powers that shape the worlds, we would participate in the shaping of our own universe.

But I do not know if all this can be done by our own powers ....

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

I hold it significant that, in the first Seminar of our New Age Association, the Mother should set before us a question which asks not so much for learned transactions as for our readiness for a New Life to which we aspire. For, ridding ourselves from the morass of ordinary mental activity we establish the basis of our aspiration.

We are, however, not entirely unacquainted with the present problem. Our Master and our Mother both have given us ample instructions for purification of the mind. They are mainly as follows: to remain conscious in the mind and reject otiose and unwholesome thoughts, together with practising an austerity of speech; to remain detached from the stream of thought-currents by going above or behind the mind; and, to practise meditation and concentration every day for a few minutes to begin with. For those who have succeeded in their efforts to lift the mind up from the ordinary mental activity,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the problem no more exists. But for those of us who have made attempts and somehow failed to attain the crowning success, the problem still remains unsolved. Let us, therefore, face the question squarely so as to realise its true nature; let us also face candidly our human weaknesses that cause our failure.

A deeper observation reveals that to obviate any spiritual problem we must have an unfailing faith in our ultimate victory and in our inherent capacity. In fact, self-confidence is the key to success in all spheres of life. Secondly, we observe that none of the spiritual problems are isolated phenomena—they are all linked up with one another. We cannot purify one part of our nature while others remain impure. We seek to surmount our ordinary mental activity, but is it really possible to attain to this victory without slaying our vital and physical desires? Do not these desires crowd our mind with unbecoming thoughts and weaken our will? And, again, can we conquer desire unless we stay away from the objects of desire, till a perfect equality is established and nothing can shake our inner serenity? Therefore, to surmount our ordinary mentality we must have a complete faith in our own capacity, we must give up desires in order to gain calm equality and lead an inner life. This we cannot do unless we stand face to face with an inevitable choice, a crucial decision: to live for the Divine alone and not for our small egoistic necessities. For, verily, we cannot serve God and Mammon both together; if we do, we shall sin against the truth of our nature.

But, once the decision is made without reserve and division, the victory is inevitable. For, there remains then only one thought in the mind, one passion in the heart, one will in life: to seek to fulfil the will of the Mother in all our activities. This remains our sole aspiration; this also, I believe, is the sole solution for all problems we encounter against our spiritual destiny.

SPEECH BY MANOJ DAS GUPTA

Friends, I believe that the Mother has given us this subject for this Seminar not because it has a wide scope for deliberation but because it is of vital importance to all those who aspire to be candidates for the New Age. Indeed we cannot hope to become superman before first becoming man in the true sense of the term. As the time at our disposal is very short I shall not enter into a discussion of what constitutes man's true manhood — though that would surely be necessary for a fuller treatment of the subject. I shall rather endeavour to give a clear idea of what we mean by the ordinary mental activity.

In all civilised societies it is widely accepted that "since man is pre-emi-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

nently the mental being, the development of the mental faculties and the richness of the mental life should be his highest aim".[1] Indeed a cultured man is he whose preoccupation is "knowledge, science, art, thought, ethics, philosophy, religion",[2] in contrast with the ordinary man who is satisfied with the mere vital-physical life: "to be born, grow up, marry, get his livelihood, support a family and then die".[3]

Seen in this light the answer to the question posed in the subject of this Seminar is obviously: Education. But I guess the word 'ordinary' in the above context has a much deeper connotation. Therefore in order to surmount the ordinary mental activity education, as we understand it today, may be a useful step but it is only a first stumbling step. For at best it is capable only of putting certain checks and controls over our animal propensities but not of transforming them.

We should also be careful not to confuse the cultured man with what Sri Aurobindo calls "the modern civilised barbarian", who for all we know may be holding not one but many university diplomas. Sri Aurobindo has given us in *The Human Cycle* an admirable account of this modern Philistine and I cannot resist the temptation of quoting a few lines from it:

"He is open to new ideas, he can catch at them and hurl them about in a rather confused fashion; he can understand, or misunderstand ideals, organise to get them carried out and even, it would appear, fight and die for them. He knows he has to think about ethical problems, social problems, problems of science and religion, to welcome with as understanding an eye as he can attain to at all the new movements of thought and inquiry and action that chase each other across the modern field or clash upon it. He is a reader of poetry as well as a devourer of fiction and periodical literature, — you will find in him perhaps a student of Tagore and an admirer of Whitman; he has perhaps no very clear ideas about beauty and aesthetics, but he has heard that Art is a not altogether unimportant part of life. The shadow of this new colossus is everywhere. He is the great reading public; the newspapers and weekly and monthly reviews are his; fiction and poetry and art are his mental caterers, the theatre and the cinema and the radio exist for him; Science hastens to bring her knowledge and discoveries to his doors and equip his life with endless machinery; politics are shaped in his image."[4]

I am afraid if we now look at ourselves in all sincerity we shall all find the shadow of this modern Philistine lurking in some hidden corners of our being. Yes, how often do we mouth only the current stock of ideas and opinions? Do we not value a person merely for his social status? Do we not feel a secret pride in being dressed *à la mode* — the latest hair-style (no matter if it should

[1] [2] [3] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent, Ed., Vol. 15), p. 75. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

resemble a crow's nest after a severe storm), the magyor cut and the pipeline trousers? ...

But this revelation of striking resemblances between ourselves and 'the modern civilised barbarian', far from being a source of despair, should on the contrary act as a strong lever to pull us out of this sorry state. We must first have a true and unflattering picture of our psychological state if we wish to transform it. We can thus fruitfully concentrate on what we are expected to become.

We believe that man is not, as revealed by Western thought, merely the mental being, but rather a soul developing under the conditions of Ignorance. Therefore, in the words of Sri Aurobindo: "Man's consciousness of the divine within himself and the world is the supreme fact of his existence and to grow into that may very well be the intention of his nature."[1] Sri Aurobindo says: "Animal man is the obscure starting-point, the present natural man, varied and tangled, the mid-road, but supernatural man the luminous and transcendent goal of our human journey."[2]

We shall therefore term 'ordinary' all activities, however high and grand according to human standards, which do not have in view this supreme fact of existence, namely, the Divine. This criterion naturally demands a complete revaluation of all our judgments. For it is no more the action but the consciousness behind it which shall matter. In this perspective a man apparently occupying a very high social rank may very well be 'ordinary' compared to a daily labourer.

I have expatiated at length on what we should understand by 'ordinary mental activity' but as to how to surmount it I shall leave my other friends to dwell upon it. I shall only mention in passing what I personally consider to be the most important step in that direction.

We must first *desire* to surmount the ordinary state of consciousness. In other words, if we are satisfied with our present self, the will to surpass it can never be dynamic and effective. This dissatisfaction may come due to several reasons and at various stages. But I think one of the most inspiring means is closer and deeper contact with the writings of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. For these writings not only awaken us to the need of a higher life but put us in touch with vibrations whose subtle effect on our consciousness is too deep for the mind to assess.

In conclusion, I would suggest the following guiding principles, taken from the book *On Education* by the Mother, for achieving our goal:

1. "Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure."[3]

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), pp. 75-76.
[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 104.
[3] *On Education* (1952), p. 54.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

2. "Never take physical happenings at their face value."[1]

3. "Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him so behave; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining."[2]

To these we shall add what the Mother considers to be the most important mental discipline: control of speech. A perfect silence: silence within, silence without. I think it is time I began observing this golden rule of silence. Thank you.

SPEECH BY PARU PATIL

Man has often been compared to a miniature world. If he is a world, his mind, we may say, is its most cosmopolitan province. For ordinarily at its frontiers there are no posts or sentries, no checks or controls of any kind. All thoughts or rather, all formations assuming the garb of thoughts get a free entry. The natural outcome of such an influx is that innumerable formations of every name and description originating from every conceivable nook and corner of our being collect and jampack the highways and even the by-paths of this huge metropolis. So thick is the cluster and so loud the confusion of the disorderly multitudes that it has all the appearance of a complete anarchy. But strictly speaking it is not an anarchy, for the province suffers not from the lack of government but from misgovernment. The vital, a foreigner to this region, has crept in stealthily along with its army of desires, preferences, prejudices and the rest and has ousted the true ruler and seized the reins of government in its hands. But blind, ignorant, restless, tempest-tossed as it is, it plays havoc with its new powers. For as soon as a thought enters from outside it casts upon it its magic spell and starts off a hideous metamorphosis at the end of which the thought completely loses its identity and merges into the jarring mass bringing into it one more note of disharmony. Thus thought after thought gets coloured and deformed and, day by day, hour by hour, the confusion grows. And yet we in our ignorance continue to identify ourselves with this nondescript mixture. We believe *this* to be our mind and submit ourselves to its mercy.

Now, if we want to put an end to this state of affairs, if we want to master the movements and activities of the mind instead of being carried off by them, the first step, the most difficult one, is to dissociate ourselves from this mental whirlpool and with the help of deep concentration get in touch with our true mental being, the mental Purusha and hand over to him the reins of government.

[1] [2] *On Education* (1952), p.54.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Once he emerges from behind the chaos, calm, detached and ever-conscious, he stands back for a while and quietly surveys his domain. When he has seen all with his dispassionate eyes he starts reshuffling and reorganising his province. He summons all thoughts before him and reviews carefully each, dismissing many, warning a few and disciplining the rest. The review over, we find on one side rows of well-disciplined thoughts holding their due ranks in the mental hierarchy and on the other a seething, pulsating chaos ready to be cast away.

After this process of purification and harmonisation, the mental Purusha turns his attention to the gate of entry. He brooks no miscreants and therefore puts a severe check on the traffic of new thoughts and thereby controls all fresh admissions.

With this measure the situation is brought fairly under control. But we cannot afford to overlook in our hasty enthusiasm a twofold danger. On the one side the vacuum and on the other the pressing multitude.

A vacuum has been created by the rejection of all useless and disturbing elements which had once formed the bulk of the entire mind content. And as nature abhors a vacuum it may be wise to consciously intensify the various activities of the mind. The sense-mind, the physical mind, the emotional mind, the thought mind could all be given the nourishment best suited to their respective natures. This measure will diminish considerably the danger of the rejected elements rushing back to their old, accustomed places.

But what must we do with these elements? Reject them and sit quiet? No. For the ceaseless vigil of the mental Purusha and even the creation of strong ramparts may prove insufficient to ward off the persistent attacks of the nether forces. The enemies have been so far merely held at bay but nothing has been done to quieten them, to win them over. So the fourth step is to extend the influence of the mental Purusha to the Prakriti parts also and convert them and discipline them, as far as that is possible, with his light and wisdom.

With this the conquest and the administration of the mental province is complete. The movements and activities of our minds are now brought fully under control and can now help us to live a fuller, a more meaningful life. But in our triumph we must not forget that we have laid our entire trust on the mental Purusha alone. But he too, if he must serve happily and for long, should not cease to grow in light and wisdom. He too must, in his turn, get in touch with a surer light, a greater force, an inexhaustible energy that can aid and support him always and always. Or else he may doze off one fine Sunday morning and the whole cycle will have to begin all over again.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

Ordinary mental activity has its origin in ignorance; it is superficial and petty in character, limited in scope. It differs from the poised activity whose dynamism starts from an inner spiritual silence and it has for its source the inner mind, life and soul. Ordinary mental activity is a flux, a surface movement and surprisingly enough, it does not change easily its nature and content. Even the most spiritual-minded seeker has his moments of common mental activity when he is pulled down from his superior consciousness. A mere outer effort or will cannot change this way of things. We need a greater aid, and on our part a greater vigilance and aspiration. So long as we are content with the vulgar, ordinary, self-repetitive way of life guided by the physical mentality, the vital impulsions, the path of least resistance, the consciousness that opposes all change or widening, we cannot hope to get out of this condition. Further we do not seek a momentary elevation followed by a relapse into the surface nature. What we seek rather is a constancy, a living in that consciousness where no waves of common emotions, feelings, thoughts and reactions can reach us and even if they did so by chance, rouse in us no response; thus the rhythm of ordinary mentality will sink down exhausted. But how are we to fulfil this difficult task?

To me personally, the problem can be solved in the way indicated below. But I do not pretend that my solution is the only or the best solution and that I am not subject to correction.

First, what we need is a concentration — a living, coherent and unchanging one-mindedness. For the ordinary life is a mass of disintegrated feelings, ideas, motives and moods. This course of ordinary nature we must change. In place of it, we must concentrate in the heart, or better still, in the soul, live in the silence of the psychic, await the inspiration that comes from above or within. In place of loose movements, the tissue of our actions and reactions, we shall have impulsions from a different source. Following concentration is silence — not the silence that is negative or fruitless but the silence that creates and is dynamic, the silence that is the source of inspiration and action. Because silence is not the native condition of common humanity, man is enamoured of din, flux and unrest; his mind loves to be the market-place of petty thoughts, motives and formations and impulses. He loves the noise of ordinary things, meaningless words, and dreads the silence in which one could have mastery, poise, power and peace, the true fountain-head of spiritual activity. We have therefore to reverse this condition, not by an austere Raja-yogic effort, but by calling down the silence from above which always gives the right motivation, the right will, the right source of action and prepares us for our dwelling in our soul.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

But this condition cannot come about if we do not really aspire to go beyond the clutch of ordinary mentality and its actions. Unless we feel in us some sincere need to rise above and give a new orientation to all our thoughts and feelings this change cannot come. If it remains only some vague ideal, or some distant Utopia, some feeling generated by association, or some dream for which we have not the capacity of fruitful manifestation, then we can never get rid of this common natural trend. It must be a genuine need and if it is genuine, then in spite of repeated failures, it would one day become the natural condition of our consciousness. If the central aspiration is there, we are sure to succeed. Behind this must stand a vigilant will to overcome all obstacles, impediments of nature and habits if this aspiration is to become a potent fact. Further, if we call the higher impulsions from above to illumine us on the one hand, and on the other, we open our gates to lower and vulgar propensities, then the labour of the Spirit in us would be futile. A revolt may result, or perhaps a psychological unrest. The face of the soul would then be veiled, and our actions may be the alternate rhythms of rise and fall.

But this upliftment or ingoing is not an escape from the so-called realities of life. We can tackle them better without lowering our consciousness and touching the same lower status of the ordinary world. An elevated consciousness can see the core of the problem, which the ordinary mental action cannot. By withdrawing from the grossness, we can discover the true value of things, their place and meaning; and it can give us the needed guidance for our own tackling of the situation.

Lastly, this elevation would not be possible unless we could constantly remember that it is not by our small human effort alone that the resultant effectivity could come. The Divine Will, Presence, Light and Love are always there guiding us, impelling us, giving us the needed strength, help, capacity, wideness, height, illumining our consciousness and leading us to our real nature, to the discovery of the soul and lastly to the Divine himself.

The soul stands behind the outer motions of life and mind and heart, and in its discovery lies the supreme secret of our transcendence of our common mentality, existence and actions. The discovery of the soul is the solution to many ills of ignorance, many problems of life-parts, emotions and reason which stand behind the common mental activity. In fact, mental activity is not an isolated occurrence. The complex psychological structure of man is behind this mask. And the unveiling of the soul would bring all this under the ray of the Divine and lead all to the culminating transformation. Unless the roots are changed, the surface cannot change. All other remedies would be only palliatives and not radical cures.

The soul by its unseen pressure and guidance can accomplish this. It can perform what may seem marvels or impossibilities. For the soul alone knows the source of light, consciousness, peace, knowledge and joy and even

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

if its face is veiled to us, it works from behind, as the invisible agent of the divine Godhead. If it could be allowed to come to the forefront and given the active reign of the workings of mind in all its aspects and of life with all its problems, then the common activity of life and mind would change, and ours shall be an effortless progression.

In the soul is the silence, the courage, the light, the nobility, the harmony, for it is the bridge between the lower nature and the Divine. In it are the needed will and strength, the needed Ananda to be the instrument of the Divine, the unseen Master. When the soul takes charge of our existence, the efforts become the Divine's endeavours, and all our activities the sacrifices to God.

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

The subject given by the Mother for our first seminar forms a very interesting piece of study. The ordinary mental activity is indeed one of the commonest maladies besieging almost all mankind.

First of all, let us see what kind of mental activities can be regarded as ordinary, before we set out to devise ways and means of surmounting them.

We mean by ordinary mental activities those thoughts and preoccupations which drag us downwards, lower our consciousness and hamper our progress. These are the most trivial and superficial thoughts, absolutely unimportant and unnecessary, continually hovering about us and invading our mind. And it is strange to say that we find so many conflicting thoughts and so many contrary ideas at a time crowding our heads, so much so that at times they make us feel dizzy. The Mother says, "You can't imagine what a bazaar there is in the head. It is something terrible."

It is the physical mind, which is most material, that is concerned with the petty thought-movements that mechanically go on in our mind without our wanting them and at times without our knowing them even. The thoughts may be those of anger, hatred, jealousy, lust and greed, or those of attachment, doubt, disbelief and distress, and so on, all of which originate in our lower nature which lies shackled in ignorance and inconscience. The Gita says,

इंन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥

"Such of the roving senses as the mind follows, that carries away the understanding, just as the winds carry away a ship on the sea."[1]

[1] *Gita*, Ch. II, Verse 67. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, pp. 43-44.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

This, in general, gives us the idea as to what ordinary mental activities are. Now, this state of the mind is as annoying as it is a hindrance to our inner growth and development. The constant inflow of pell-mell thoughts definitely stands as a bar to the spontaneous expression of the deeper values of life.

Now, let us see how best we can overcome this ordinary round of thoughts which occupy so much of our time and consciousness in our daily life. To find a solution, we are naturally led to the path of yoga. In fact, the very definition of yoga, according to Patanjali, the father of Indian yoga philosophy, is the "control of thought-waves in the mind". Sri Aurobindo also writes, "It is by the thought that we dissipate ourselves in the phenomenal; it is by the gathering back of the thought into itself that we must draw ourselves back into the real."[1] Certainly, it is not an easy job. In fact, as we shall see presently, it is quite a Herculean task.

To indulge in ordinary thoughts presupposes an ordinary state of consciousness. So, logically it follows that to come out of the ordinary thoughts we must either rise higher or go deeper in consciousness. There are several ways of attaining these states.

They can be broadly divided into synthetic and analytic. The synthetic way of approach is comparatively easier for those having an introspective bent of mind. The analytic way of approach tends to be rather intellectual which is quite difficult. A certain amount of analysis is involved in the synthetic way also; and then the analytic way too finally merges into the synthetic. As we shall now see, there is no sharp line demarcating the boundaries of the two. They are, in fact, complementary, each helping and fulfilling the other.

In the synthetic way of approach, we can include aspiration, prayer, concentration, meditation, reflection, etc., with a view to silencing the mind. Needless to say that aspiration marks the first step. Prayer is perhaps the easiest method within immediate access to all. We may pray to the Divine and call down peace and serenity in our mind and consciousness. We may concentrate our mind on some higher thought or idea. With regard to concentration and meditation Sri Aurobindo writes, "This may be done by various ways; one is to stand back from the mental action altogether not participating in but simply watching it until, tired of its unsanctioned leaping and running, it falls into an increasing and finally an absolute quiet. Another is to reject the thought-suggestions, to cast them away from the mind whenever they come and firmly hold to the peace of the being which really and always exists behind the trouble and riot of the mind."[2] We may also meditate to empty our mind of all thoughts. It then becomes

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 304.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 310.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"a wide silence suffused with a still luminosity".

The more the mind will be silent, the easier will it be on our part to elevate our consciousness, to be always at our best and highest, and to open ourselves to ever widening horizons where the ordinary thoughts cannot reach. Also, in our mind's silence, we can go deeper and deeper and pass beyond the range of ordinary thoughts, and come in contact with the essence of our self, the psychic being, which is the direct spark of the Divine in us. Once the psychic being comes to the forefront and takes the lead, it will gradually put an end to all that is ordinary and undesirable, bringing perfect harmony in our thought-patterns.

Those who are too much entangled in the turmoil of ordinary thoughts may take up some particular line of study and application, such as art, painting, writing, music, poetry, philosophy, science, physical culture or any other subject requiring an absorbing concentration and diligent labour for their achievement, so much so that no stray or commonplace thought can cross their mind or draw their attention.

Of course, it is not possible for all to take recourse to these lines, unless they have the aptitude and inclination for these subjects. For them the easiest way is to take up some useful and disinterested work within their capacity to shift their attention from the petty and disturbing mental movements. To devote ourselves to some disinterested work with a sincere good will, for example, to work for the Divine or for some high Ideal, is of immense value for all of us in acquiring an inner discipline and poise, and in collecting our consciousness.

Alongside with the above, it will do well to adapt ourselves to some regular physical exercises which serve the purposes not only of body-building but of character-building as well. Physical exercise, done in the right way and right spirit, will go a long way in forming healthy mental habits and in instilling strength and stability in our general nature, as also in broadening our outlook and enabling us thereby to automatically resist the intrusions of unwholesome mental suggestions.

Let us now cast a glance at what has been termed the analytic way of approach. This consists in analysing our mental processes. We shall analyse the steps which are needed in finally freeing our mind of all thoughts and dispositions which are ordinary and outward-diverting.

The first step necessary to get over the ordinary mental activities is to feel the need of a radical change in our mental build-up and consciousness, as also the will on our part to rise above the ordinary thought-movements. Unless we are really willing to get rid of them, and until we feel the need of exceeding ourselves it is futile to try.

The next step is that we must try to be conscious, conscious of the various conflicting thoughts that our mind indulges in. This automatically requires us

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to be attentive and vigilant which again implies a steady observation. We must try to be inwardly conscious and vigilant and carefully observe, in a detached way, the various thought currents that perpetually influence and overpower our mind, so to say.

After we have become sufficiently conscious of the diverse thoughts that ceaselessly flow into our mind like so many cross-currents, and after we have sufficiently increased our power of observation, the next step will be to arrange and classify these multifarious thoughts. This will be an interesting study indeed. In our classification, we shall come across a very few sensible thoughts that are useful in some way or other; these can be retained in our consciousness. And the rest will be found to be devoid of any substance at all; such thoughts are to be eliminated and forthwith rejected and chased away. It is true, it is easier said than done. Still, if we are really serious about it, we must put in our maximum effort with a view to finally succeeding in our endeavour. Now, to come back to our point, these rejected thoughts do not easily want to get away from our environment; some of them take refuge in the subconscious mind and leap up at the earliest opportunity; and the very nature of the physical mind is that it comes back again and again to dwell upon these silly thought-formations. What we have to do is to persistently reject them; and for this we must cultivate the qualities of patience, perseverance and endurance. These ordinary thought-waves will go on assailing us with such obstinacy that we must be much more obstinate than those mass of thoughts which are absolutely useless and serve no other purpose than to distract and disperse our consciousness. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "For the buzz of the physical mind, reject it quietly, without getting disturbed, till it feels discouraged and retires shaking its head and saying, 'This fellow is too calm and strong for me.' "[1]

Then, we must gradually learn to organise our thoughts, i.e., to regulate our thinking procedure so that the thoughts which we need at a particular moment to serve a particular purpose may alone find their way to our mind, and no unnecessary thought be prowling about. To say in one word, we must have disciplined thinking. We must strive hard and master our thoughts instead of sacrificing ourselves to the mercy of ordinary thoughts.

To achieve such efficiency in mastering the ordinary thoughts, the first condition which is indispensable is a quiet and silent mind with an equable disposition. Without the equanimity and tranquillity constantly enveloping our mind, it is impossible to come to any mastery whatsoever. The Mother says, "When one will have learnt to silence the mind at will and concentrate it in the receptive silence, then there will be no problem that one cannot solve, no mental difficulty to which a solution will not be found. Thought, while in agitation, becomes confused and impotent; in an attentive tranquillity, the

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 733.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

light can manifest itself and open new horizons to man's capacity."[1]

We will have to put forth our utmost personal effort, i.e., a strong determination, a sharp vigilance, an organised thinking and a silent mind, in order to accomplish an uphill task of such magnitude.

But personal effort, by itself, is not fully effective. To make it permanently effective and successful, we will have to evoke the Divine's Grace, Help and Guidance. With the intervention of the Grace, it will be made infinitely more easy than we can conceive, because we know, there is nothing which the Grace cannot achieve. What is needed of us is a conscious collaboration with the forces of Light and Wisdom. We must learn to open our mind's portals to the Mother's protective Grace and Force so as to receive in silence this inner and secret guidance which is always helping us in freeing our mind from the queer *entremêlée* of discordant thoughts, liberating us, thereby, in a permanent way from the grip of ordinary mental activities. The Gita says,

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥

"When all the mental consciousness is perfectly controlled and liberated from desire and remains still in the self, then it is said, 'he is in yoga.' "[2]

So, we come to the conclusion that it is the personal will and effort combined with the active support of the Divine's Grace that is the best way of overcoming ordinary mental activities.

SPEECH BY SUMITA CHAKRAVARTI

We feel our mind to be something indispensable to our being; we cherish it as an object our very own. Yet do we not often wonder at the little we know of its activity?

We have been asked here to speak on what we think to be the best way to overcome our ordinary mental activity. This immediately calls for an account of our daily experience of mind and its ways. When I observe my mind even a little carefully I find that like a spider it constantly spins webs of thoughts. This thought movement is a fast, incessant current going outwards, on which I have little or no control. It begins at a point and then extends in a centrifugal manner. One particular chain continues till another idea or sensa-

[1] *On Education* (1952), p. 46.

[2] *Gita*, Ch. VI, Verse 18. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 100.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tion breaks in and a fresh web starts. Thus the mind works on mechanically, irrationally and most often I am unaware of this perennial outflow of thought. It is only at times, all of a sudden, that I catch my mind busy in the midst of a crowd of ideas and then it is very difficult to discover what began it all. "This is how human life passes in most part. This is what we most often call thinking."

As a natural result of the tremendous onrush of thoughts at every second, our mind lives without any order, in a state of constant confusion and agitation, while our thinking capacity becomes haphazard and follows no method.

This superficial activity of the mind has to be stopped if we wish at all to arrive at real thinking, that is to say, receiving, formulating and forming valid and necessary thoughts and at keeping our mind well arranged. To surmount this ordinary and habitual activity of the mind is not an easy task at all. For, when face to face with it, we find that our mind is almost beyond all our control; rather *it* seems to be the master, driving *us* at its own fancy and whim. Moreover, we seem to have definitely an attachment and a weakness for the fanciful thoughts that fill our mind.

There is one effective way of surmounting this difficulty: that is, to bring the mind under control through concentration; only then can we use it at our command and need.

The very first step in our attempt to control the mind is to realise that we act according to our thoughts and if we do not have full control over our mind, we cannot hold our actions in leash either. Such a discovery fortifies our will and this is the moment to take up the resolution to detach our mind from the influx of thoughts, to stand and watch from a distance. We become conscious of the futility of the multitude of petty shallow thoughts rushing in, and we close our doors to them.

Of course, this is more easily said than done. In practice it takes time, needs sincere and persistent efforts and also enough patience to survive thwarted attempts. It is often better not to try to reject every thought and vacate the mind all at once but to have recourse to a more gradual procedure. It is often wiser to choose an idea, or a symbol as the object of concentration and then to approach it step by step in a centrepetal manner. This gradually succeeds in bringing the mind under discipline and control and finally in rejecting all stray ideas, and thus helps the development of our mental being.

Concentration is one way; however, the method of concentration differs with every individual, for, as the Mother says: "Everyone by successive tentatives must ascertain his own method."

At times, however, there comes a persistent and nagging chain of thought which clouds our mind and thwarts all our efforts to reject it. The only and best way then, as we all know it, is to send up a prayer to the Mother. If the prayer is sincere and ardent her Help never fails to respond.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY TARUN BANERJI

Silence is indispensable for surmounting our ordinary mental activity. But the silence must be perfect and absolute. An imperfect and incomplete silence may take us beyond our mind, but may not necessarily help us to "surmount" it. On the contrary, it may plunge us into a more dark and confused realm. For, beyond our ordinary surface mind there are realms after realms of the subliminal consciousness with their luminous as well as dark layers. Merely entering into it is not inevitably entering into its realms of light and knowledge; it may very well be an entrance into its dark regions of ignorance, which Sri Aurobindo calls "false subjectivism". If that happens then from our ordinary obscure mental movements we have moved into regions of greater darkness and falsehood; we have failed to "surmount" our mental activities. Again, around us there is the cosmic consciousness with its double aspect of knowledge and ignorance. An incomplete silence of our ordinary mind will not hew our path towards the greater knowledge of the cosmic consciousness but towards its vaster ignorance. All around there lies what Sri Aurobindo calls "the intermediate zone", the zone which has brought disaster to so many sadhaks.

But, then, what is the best way of attaining this perfect and absolute silence, the silence that would enable us to surmount our ordinary mental activity?

Once Ramakrishna was asked, "How to realize God?" He replied that as a man would gasp for breath if held tight under water, so must one find this life suffocating before he can realize God. Similarly, if we wish to surmount our mental activity we must feel suffocated in its ordinary movements. We must gasp for the supernal Truth, the supernal Light and with the help of the Guru, find the way out of the mind towards the higher Light. Sri Aurobindo has stated clearly: "It is idle for anyone to expect that he can follow this road far, — much less go to the end by his own inner strength and knowledge without the true aid or influence. Even the ordinary long-practised yogas are hard to follow without the aid of the Guru; in this which as it advances goes through untrodden countries and unknown entangled regions, it is quite impossible."[1]

Steady concentration on some figure or symbol seems to me to be one of the best ways of surmounting our ordinary mental flux. For, by this concentration, on the one hand, our mind becomes silent and, on the other, this silence gets constantly refilled by the higher spiritual consciousness that is beyond mind.

But let me hasten to tell you that whatever be the way, without the

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 1045.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Guru's aid or influence nothing can be done. In this Hour of God when "the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being"[1], if we consciously and sincerely let our Guru, the Divine Mother, intervene with her full power and force, she will slowly or swiftly silence our ordinary mental activity and lift us up into the new Supramental Consciousness. We must remember that "it is the hour of the unexpected"[2] when she alone knows the best way and she alone is the helper.

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

Q: Usually I am unable to concentrate in the sense of meditation. If I cannot meditate I can only imagine myself lying eternally in the Mother's lap.

A: That is the best possible kind of meditation.

(*A letter*) August 1935

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SECOND SEMINAR

22 November 1964

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:

How to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life.

"How to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Consider the Divine Life as the most important thing to obtain.

"Consider the Divine Life as the most important thing to obtain."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO BE STEADY AND SINCERE IN OUR ASPIRATION FOR THE DIVINE LIFE

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY KISHOR GANDHI

It needs hardly to be said that the subject that the Mother has given for this Seminar directly points to the central aim of our yoga. That aim, as you know, is the establishment of the Divine Life upon earth by the manifestation of the Supermind in earthly evolution. The first and the most essential requisite for the realisation of this aim is to have an *aspiration* for it — an aspiration that is *steady*, i.e. sustained, steadfast, constant, unfailing, unfaltering, not vacillating, wavering, spasmodic; also an aspiration that is *sincere*, i.e. one-pointed, whole-hearted, total and integral, true and pure, not divided, self-contradictory, mixed, hypocritical, deceptive.

This is the obvious meaning of the Mother's subject, but there is so much more implied in it which will not be so obvious at first sight to those who have not earnestly practised Sri Aurobindo's yoga. In the actual practice of yoga the terms "steadiness" and "sincerity" unfold so many shades of meaning that it is not possible to reduce all of them to a single definition or explanation. Though the central core of their meaning remains the same, it reveals several subtle variations in the dynamic endeavour and living experience of sadhana. It is for this reason that each sadhak of Sri Aurobindo's yoga can have his own individual interpretation of these terms derived from his own inner understanding and experience and can therefore explain in his own unique and distinctive manner the subject which the Mother has given.

So we expect that the speakers participating in this Seminar, though they have to speak on the same subject, will each of them explain to us some unique significances of it revealed to them in their exploration of the vast ranges of inner experience in their own sadhana.

I may also add that the subject before us this morning is not only of *central* importance in Sri Aurobindo's yoga but, at the present moment, of *urgent* importance. The supramental manifestation for the establishment of the Divine Life upon earth, which has been all these long years the aim of Sri Aurobindo's yoga, has now in its initial phase already taken place on 29 February 1956 in the subtle physical atmosphere of the earth, and since then it has been constantly pressing for its unveiled manifestation in the external life and material conditions of the world. The obstruction which still resists its pressure will soon break down and then the agelong human dream of the Divine Life upon earth will begin to be realised. Because of this supreme significance of the present period in the history of humanity, the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Mother has called it the "Hour of God" and has given us an urgent call to prepare for it.

The Hour of God will bring the Divine Life on earth and to prepare for it, to be ready for it, the essential condition is to *aspire* for it — to aspire *steadily* and *sincerely*. At the present moment that is the urgent demand of the Time-Spirit, the imminent call of the Master of evolution to man on whom lies the burden of carrying that evolution beyond the misty skies of the mind into the solar vastnesses of the Supermind.

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

Sincerity is the watchword, the key to the divine doors; without it we cannot hope to be steady. And sincerity, for us, is a progressive term. Not that we need to doubt our integrity, but we become more and more sincere as we learn more fully in all parts of our being to aspire for and collaborate in the Life Divine.

It is a little difficult at first to make ourselves understand that our sincerity is incomplete, so satisfied we are with our attitude towards life and our understanding of the Ideal. But once that vanity is broken, life and all that surrounds us become an ever-widening source of self-realisation. We look at all the circumstances of our life, all our actions and reactions in the light of the Ideal. Any preference or indulgence will distort our vision and mar our judgment. Then, if we are strong enough, we shall pick up any dark spot in our nature and hold it in the presence of the purifying Flame of our soul. That is the constant sacrifice required by the Immortal Guest in our mortality before any steadiness in the aspiration can be achieved. No blemish, no weakness can remain in the nature if we want to be ready for the Integral Transformation. And we cannot get rid of our pettinesses or insincerity by suppression; we have to get rid of them by opening to the Mother's Conscious-Force that guides us patiently through all....For this we need a lot of courage, a courage which has no bravado but which adds to one's personality a finer quality of stability and confidence — not confidence in our petty selves but in that Power which sustains us all, the "unseen Presence" which "moulds the oblivious clay".

The more fully sincere we become in all the parts of our being the more our aspiration gains in steadiness. Then whatever part of our being is in the forefront the aspiration is there because we have established sincerity first. The whole day with its numerous activities, the night with its physical sleep, can all contribute to the happy building of a one-pointed Ideal and become part of our aspiration for a Higher Life.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

This does not mean rigidly leading a so-called virtuous and upright life, dry and very self-contentedly superior to others. On the contrary, it is a life full of humility, one in which we marvel at the constant working of the Divine's Grace and where all the parts of our being find the full satisfaction of an intense and purified self-expression.

The biggest danger here is to go astray under the illusion of being truthful to something in our nature that craves for expression. And yet, it is not really going astray if we have acted under the illusion in all sincerity! Our very mistake will turn out to be a stepping-stone towards a greater progress; something is bound to occur that will show us the fault and help us to revert to the right path. Such is the work of the "unerring Hand" that "shapes event and act", such is the Wisdom that "guides the mysteried world".

But if, knowing that it is an element in our nature that must change, we do nothing about it, then things are more difficult. We have to wait for the moment when a great shock or the Mother's Grace will break the resistance—wait for the blows of Mahakali which "beat what is rebellious in their material into strength and perfect truth, hammer straight what is wry and perverse and expel what is impure or defective".[1]

An interesting paradox of our daily life, when we try to be steady and sincere in our aspiration, is our conscious effort towards spontaneity: conscious, so that we may not give expression to any unwanted movement; spontaneous, because we are concentrated and one-pointed in our purpose. The only safe way is perhaps to cling to the psychic being which alone can successfully invoke the Mother's presence in our life and thus gradually achieve the total sincerity which leads to steadiness in aspiration.

SPEECH BY CHANDA PODDAR

The Mother and Sri Aurobindo are at every moment with the aspirants of the Divine Life and leading them on their journey towards it. They have trodden the unknown path and cloven ways through impenetrable desert, forest and rock, leaving for us a mapped and easier road with all the possible sign-posts. But human nature is such that man follows inevitably the hard, hampered and roundabout way and, when knowingly or unknowingly he falls into a dark pit, calls for the "veiled powerful hands" to pull him out. But once out, he just cannot help crashing down into another, until surprisingly the Hands reach him and he clings to them wounded and *hors d'haleine*. We have all shared this experience. Now the question is: how to avoid or reduce the parachuting into these chasms?

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 29.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The way out would be to aspire for these "screened Hands" which reach us everywhere, to rely on them and have trust in their capability and to let them carry us on the sunlit path. When the aspiration fails us or the faith is shaken, then we must remember that those "tremendous Hands" are always there to uplift us. We have only to call and still call for their help. One feels so much comfort and solace by hearing the Mother say, "When difficulties besiege you, know that the Divine Grace is with you."

The path of the Divine Life is not an easy one and the total change of the nature cannot be done in a day; steadiness is a very necessary requisite. Doubt, despair, inertia and impatience appear everywhere as stumbling-blocks to our faith in the Divine Grace. The Master in his luminous way and the Mother in her loving and protecting manner have told us how to overcome this stage.

Let me quote a letter of the Master which, though somewhat long, is one of the most striking letters I have read on the subject. Most reassuring and persuasive in his tone, the Master says:

"What I want of you besides aspiring for faith? Well, just a little thoroughness and persistence in the method! Don't aspire for two days and then go into the dumps, evolving a gospel of earthquake and Schopenhauer plus the ass and all the rest of it. Give the Divine a full sporting chance. When he lights something in you or is preparing a light, don't come in with a wet blanket of despondency and throw it on the poor flame. You will say, 'It is a mere candle that is lit — nothing at all!' But in these matters, when the darkness of human mind and life and body has to be dissipated, a candle is always a beginning — a lamp can follow and afterwards a sun; but the beginning must be allowed to have a sequel and not get cut off from its natural sequelæ by chunks of sadness and doubt and despair. At the beginning, and for a long time, the experiences do usually come in little quanta with empty spaces between — but, if allowed its way, the spaces will diminish and the quantum theory give way to the Newtonean continuity of the spirit. But you have never yet given it a real chance. The empty spaces have been peopled with doubts and denials and so the quanta have become rare, the beginning remains a beginning. Other difficulties you have faced and rejected, but this difficulty you have dandled too much for a long time and it has become strong — it must be dealt with by a persevering effort. I do not say that all doubts must disappear before anything comes — that would be to make sadhana impossible, for doubt is the mind's persistent assailant. All I say is, don't allow the assailant to become a companion, don't give him the open door and the fireside seat. Above all, don't drive away the incoming Divine with that dispiriting wet blanket of sadness and despair!

"To put it more soberly — accept once and for all that this thing has to

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

be done, that it is the only thing left for yourself or the earth. Outside are earthquakes and Hitlers and a collapsing civilisation and, generally speaking, the ass and the flood. All the more reason to tend towards the one thing to be done, the thing you have been sent to aid in getting done. It is difficult and the way long and the encouragement given meagre? What then? Why should you expect so great a thing to be easy or that there must be either a swift success or none? The difficulties have to be faced and the more cheerfully they are faced, the sooner they will be overcome. The one thing to do is to keep the mantra of success, the determination of victory, the fixed resolve, 'Have it I must and have it I will.' Impossible? There is no such thing as impossibility — there are difficulties and things of *longue haleine*, but no impossibles. What one is determined fixedly to do, will get done, now or later — it becomes possible. Drive out dark despair and go bravely on with your yoga. As the darkness disappears, the inner doors will open."[1]

In another passage he writes, "Anything else one may doubt but that he who desires only the Divine shall reach the Divine is a certitude, and more certain than two and two make four."[2] So one must have trust and faith in the Divine Grace. But one has to take care, for there is a great difference between the attitude of the shirker, who says with the tamasic and ineffective faith, "I won't do anything; let Mother do everything" and that of the sadhak who tries his best with a dynamic faith and then leaves the rest to the Divine.

At every step one meets the opposite forces throwing doubts like a rope between the legs to stop one short with a stumble since it is their *métier* to do so. They obey their law of existence and do their function. We should on the other hand learn to live within and feel the true Self in us, and regard the rest as only a flux of changing movements on the surface which are sure to go as the true self emerges. We should become conscious and reject the movements of Prakriti and become one with the calm and quiet Purusha. This also helps one to become steadier.

Sometimes some sort of work is necessary to get into the full stream of the sadhana and not drift away to one side and go circling there. Often we have heard the Mother ask people to work in order to be free from some persisting wrong movement. So there are different ways of becoming steady on the path according to one's own nature, but steady we must be in our sincere aspiration for the Divine Life.

Now arises the question: What is meant by sincerity? When is one not sincere? and how to be sincere in our aspiration? By sincerity is meant "the unification and harmonisation of the whole being in all its parts and move-

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), pp. 628-629.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 585.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ments around the central Divine Will." One is insincere so long as even one part of the being is unwilling to live according to the Divine Will. To have this sincerity means to have an introspective self-vision, for men have always qualities and defects mingled together. If we are to have the Divine Life on the earth, we must have only one desire and aspiration, to realise the spiritual Truth and manifest it in all our thoughts and feelings and actions and nature. I am reminded here of the story of the wolf in the Mother's book, *Tales of all Time*. Often we behave like the wolf, as the Mother says, parading fine sentiments because it suits our interests and we pose as little saints when we cannot give free rein to our vices[1]. But no, once we have decided to realise the Divine, we must want nothing else but the Divine, come what may. There is to be no bargaining, no mixing up of the desires with the spiritual aspiration, no sitting reluctantly on the wayside but to go on seeking and seeking only That with an absolute courage and an unending perseverance.

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

Sincerity can be cultivated by the combination of two elements: ideal and will. Our aspiration to live the Divine Life is a spiritual ideal. We may have arrived at it by a psychic urge or by a philosophical insight or by the influence of a Guru or a spiritual society such as we have here in the Ashram. Whatever may be the source of our ideal, to enliven it there must be a will and an enthusiasm. But again, only a strong will and a bursting enthusiasm without a noble ideal to guide them do not lead us anywhere. It is like having only oars and no boat — we may charge the water with all our ferocity but we never get going. Thus our problem is to harmonise these two elements — ideal and enthusiasm — because in their harmony lies our steady progress which is always a mark of sincerity.

An ideal to be effective must be clear, as a Chinese sage used to say, "Like a pearl under clear unturbulent water." Desires, ambitions, ego muddy the water of our nature and we lose sight of our aspiration. In other words, we are caught on the way by some unwanted elements of pleasure which delay our journey. What we call insincerity is this dallying with things that are simply unnecessary for one's ideal. We must be therefore vigilant to keep our aspiration steady and clear in our vision. The only way to do it is to fall in love with the aspiration or the object of aspiration. For, the very spur of love is to arrive at union — it creates an urge, a will to realise the ideal in life. Here our aspiration is to live the Divine Life. But what conception do we have of the Divine that we may form with Him a relation of love?

[1] See *Tales of All Time* (1951), p. 84.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"I am He", "Thou are That, O Swetaketu", "All this is the Brahman, this Self is the Brahman". These are too vast, too deep conceptions of the Divine to enamour our ordinary heart and mind. But, while it is difficult to grasp the Supreme Divine or the Brahman, it is easy to grasp the Divine Mother who has come down in our midst with the promise to guide the noblest of our human aspirations — to live the Divine Life. In our love for her lies our highest fulfilment, because love demands among many things a devoted obedience; if we have that we cannot but act sincerely.

Thus, to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life there must be a harmony of our aspiration and will, and love alone can effect this harmony. Steadiness, sincerity, will — these are all means to arrive at the union with the Divine but, when we have got the Divine Mother near us, let us love her with all the passion of our heart.

There was an ancient mystic who used to say, "A basket trap is for catching fish, but when one has got the fish one need think no more of the basket." We have got the fish at hand. Let us be quick to catch it so that we have not to bother long about the basket.

SPEECH BY MANOJ DAS GUPTA

Friends, the subject of our talk, as you all know, is: "How to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life." Sincerity and steadiness are the two most fundamental prerequisites for success in any endeavour, not to speak of *The Endeavour* that is yoga. But the irony of it all is that I am called upon to deliver a speech on these two virtues which are somehow glaringly lacking in the complex jumble of personalities called 'myself'. But since such is the order of the day — to speak most on what one is least qualified to — you find me here in the pulpit, unashamed and even harbouring a secret hope of being appreciated.

The Mother, when once asked: "What is the fundamental virtue to cultivate in order to prepare oneself for the spiritual life?", emphatically replied:

"I have said this many times, but this is an opportunity to repeat it. It is *sincerity* ..."[1]

Sri Aurobindo also has told us in the same unmistakable tone:

"There is one indispensable condition, sincerity."[2]

[1] *Questions and Answers*, 1956, p. 218.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 560.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Let us therefore first try to understand what the Mother and Sri Aurobindo mean by sincerity. The Mother says:

"To be absolutely sincere is not to have any division, any contradiction in one's being."[1]

In other words, sincerity implies the unification of all the divergent and conflicting elements of our being. As the Mother puts it:

"Sincerity means to lift all the movements of the being to the level of the highest consciousness and realisation already attained.

"Sincerity exacts the unification and harmonisation of the whole being in all its parts and movements around the central Divine Will."

Unification — aye, there's the rub. For we are in a state of being where the lower and the higher parts are like "an ill-assorted wife and husband"[2] in an unhappy wedlock, constantly at war with each other. The only solution prescribed so far has been to appeal for a divorce. For, the moment we hearken to the higher call the lower immediately assails us with its dull inertia and waves of depression and declares a total Satyagraha far more successful than any Gandhiji could ever dream of. On the other hand, following the dictates of the lower being, there soon comes a strong dissatisfaction in the very satisfaction of the desires and the higher takes a silent revenge by a sort of undefinable cramp in the place where biologically the heart is situated.

Is then the dream of a total harmonisation of our being a mere utopia? No, on the contrary, assert the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, this is the secret intention of Nature in her slow and steady evolution. We are called upon to participate consciously in this movement and thereby hasten the process, first in our individual life, then in the collective life of humanity in general. But that the goal may be achieved we have first to discover in us that divine element, the psychic being, which is our true self and which alone has the key to all harmony, and make it the leader of our march. This demands an aspiration constant and vigilant. We have to learn to replace our velleities by a strong intelligent will. By cultivating this dynamic will-power we shall grow more and more in our sincerity. Herein comes the question of steadiness and perseverance. For the battle is hard and interminable. Yet, to the perseverant the final victory is assured. Such an assurance should infuse in us a constant cheerfulness which has the power to change the nature of all struggle into a playful fight.

Therefore, though ill-equipped, frail and impotent, let us launch on the

[1] *Questions and Answers*, 1956, p. 248.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 222.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

great Adventure, without making any bargain whatsoever, putting our entire reliance on the Mother's power and remembering all the while the Master's assuring words:

"Whatever the appearance we must bear,
Whatever our strong ills and present fate,
When nothing we can see but drift and bale,
A mighty Guidance leads us still through all."[1]

Friends, this Guidance is the touch of our Mother's magic hands. So let's take comfort. Thank you.

SPEECH BY MITA CHAKRAVARTI

Life must have an aim. In ordinary life a man is supposed to do his duties to others, to his nation. The fulfilment of these tasks becomes the greatest aim of his life. But here, in the Ashram, that aim is of course not sufficient. Our goal is to turn our life into Divine Life, the life which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have brought down on the earth for us, the life which is now at our door waiting for our call. It is a life where the Divine penetrates into the core of our being and transforms us into the higher Light and Truth.

This great life is open to everyone who asks for it. This asking, this invoking, is the aspiration. The truth is given to the seeker without any hesitation but the seeker too must fulfil certain conditions. The very first condition is that his aspiration should be sincere and steady. And here comes the question put by the Mother: "How to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the Divine Life?"

To be sincere means that all the parts of our being must be united in their aspiration for the Divine Life. It will not do if the seeker wants the Divine only with his heart and not with his mind or *vice versa*; it has to be the call from every part of his being. The resultant call which goes to the Supreme has to be harmonised and complete in all its functions and movements. And, to be sincere also means "To want the Divine for the Divine's sake, not for fame or name or prestige or power or satisfaction of vanity."

It is very difficult to be sincere and to send such a pure harmonised call, such an ardent prayer to the Supreme. Each part of the human nature wants to cling to its old ways of life. In its own ignorant territories it is the sovereign power. Any transmutation to higher life will mean a great loss to it. It can no longer be the all-powerful monarch of its empire. So it

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Bk. I, Canto I, p. 59

मुमुक्षु भवन वेद वेदाङ्ग पुस्तकालय
आगत क्रमांक... 1433
दिनांक...

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

revolts against the light and refuses to change.

In order to be sincere this hurdle has to be crossed. As in the case of all other problems, the Mother herself has told us how to face this difficulty. It is the best and only method; it may vary with the individual but the main principle is always the same.

First of all, the seeker has to be conscious of the Divine element in him, the psychic. He must understand and feel that the aspiration of the psychic for the higher Light and Truth is the main aim of his life. Once the psychic presence is felt and realised, that is to say, the difference between the Divine and the undivine is perceived, and the seeker really wants the Divine for the Divine's sake, there is nothing else to do but to listen to the inner voice and to reject all that is contrary to the Divine's Will.

The seeker must also scrutinise every nook and corner of his nature. He must find out each unwilling part of his being that refuses to participate in the aspiration and hides itself in the darkness of the inconscience. These parts are to be treated like disobedient children. The seeker has to act upon them patiently and persistently so as to convince them of their stupid errors. They must be persuaded to give up their insistence on the vital aims and attachments, the mental preferences and the physical laziness and unwillingness to change.

But these adversaries rise time and again. The mental constructions and vital passions don the disguise of the Divine Will, the unyielding parts continue with their refusals and revolts until the person becomes integrally sincere. And thus it becomes necessary to be steady in aspiration. The continuous struggle for progress and the repeated aggression of undivine forces bring depression and doubt, fatigue and fear. To come out of these we need a firm will to do the sadhana with infinite patience and an unshakable trust in the Divine. Doubts or disbeliefs have to be thrown away persistently and patiently with a confidence in the ultimate victory.

No one can achieve this on his own, unaided and unguided. It is only with the Divine Grace on one's side, that one can face these resistances and be more obstinate than the adversaries, so as to proceed and win the battle. A constant psychic opening, a persistent rejection of lower impulses and a separation of oneself from all hostile contradicting suggestions, can bring down the calm, light, peace and purity of the Mother's Force, which alone can liberate us from all sorts of difficulties.

SPEECH BY MONA SARKAR

The question, posed in the subject of this Seminar, itself is a renewed revela-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tion to me, a pointer for yet another assault on the ever-baffling problem of the inner and outer harmony and a steadfast aspiration for the Divine Life.

For when we begin to analyse or study the diverse activities of every moment of our life, be it in sleep or the waking consciousness, we are aware of the great shortcoming of our effort. For as yet we are a bundle of desires, impulses and a whirlwind of thought-movements. And it is these elements which crop up either from the subconscient or our surroundings and assail us constantly. Now a clear perception of our shortcoming and how we are lured by the external life in spite of our so-called firm resolutions to live a true spiritual life, would elucidate the question under consideration. If we are asked the question, "Do you think of the Mother constantly throughout day and night and every day of the year?" the answer evidently is understood because even when one might be aspiring — say, for a considerable part of the day — the aspiration is not constant; sometimes it may be just a mechanical repetition of "*mā, mā, mā*"; and sometimes too one is inadvertently swept off one's feet by the tide of environmental circumstances (maybe a thought, a vital impulse or a physical sensation). Though the Grace is always there to help us and the helping hand never abandons those who aspire, still we are too prone to err and too enamoured of our old habits. We cling to them forgetting our true *raison d'être*.

Even when we take up yoga with a firm resolute will to pursue it (which we often do, knowing also very well that ultimately there is no other way for us but the Divine Life), still sometimes unknowingly we betray our aim.

In yoga there are such ups and downs and rises and falls that the very fact of them staggers the seeker and leaves him dumbfounded. Often it so happens that the aspiration rises and peace and quietude descend from above and there is a constant feeling of nearness to the Mother; experiences flow and one is rapt with unearthly joy and peace. One aspires for more and more of these experiences with increasing steadfastness. Things take on different values, as if hallowed by a spiritual aura. Then the seeker, not being satisfied with what he has received and assimilating it in his being with patience and quietude, tries instead to seek beyond his present capacities impatiently and thereby invites great trouble. For even a slight deviation or a little carelessness may jeopardise his effort and may leave him naked of his experience, because of his agitated impatience. So the steadiness in yoga is not to be misunderstood in the sense that the seeker always advances steadily unhampered, without any deviation, depression or fall; in fact, it implies that these sidetracks give a greater incentive or impetus for a leap forward to the seeker who keeps his faith unshaken and never loses his confidence.

As for sincerity, it is an inner state in which the seeker is guided by his own discernment which comes when there is no division or bichotomy detween his outer and his inner life. There is a unified harmony which permeates

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and guides his whole life in accordance with his true aim — to accept without resistance or doubt the Mother as the Supreme and her workings as infallible.

Before the seeker achieves a steady and sincere status of being he must build in himself all the qualities that will enhance his progress and make him fit for yoga. Even if he falls he shall rise with greater certitude and renewed vigour to advance and never to accept defeat. He must keep an open heart to aspire from below and receive the peace from above; a quiet mind capable of rejecting petty and unwanted chains of thought-movements; a strong will to pursue the path and an unflagging enthusiasm; and a strong and supple body that does not shrink but keeps pace with the progress.

For the seeker who takes up yoga the difficulties that beset him at the beginning are due to his inability to build up these requisite qualities in him. So he must be prepared for them. To put it beautifully in Sri Aurobindo's language, "No Yoga can be successfully undertaken and followed unless there is a strong awakening to the necessity of that larger spiritual existence. The soul that is called to this deep and vast change, may arrive in different ways to the initial departure. It may come to it by its own natural development which has been leading it unconsciously towards the awakening .... According to the nature and the circumstances the call will come."[1]

"But if we desire to make the most of the opportunity that this life gives us, if we wish to respond adequately to the call we have received and to attain to the goal we have glimpsed, not merely advance a little towards it, it is essential that there should be an entire self-giving. The secret of success in Yoga is to regard it not as one of the aims to be pursued in life, but as the whole of life."[2]

Sri Aurobindo also gives us assurance in a different way to pull us through our difficulties if we keep the right attitude. To quote his words: "The house of the Divine is not closed to any who knock sincerely at its gates, whatever their past stumbles and errors."[3] Most reassuring are these words to those despondent seekers who are prejudiced by sin and virtue and lament with a sigh, "O! how can I achieve the Truth with such errors and falsehood within me?" But to man is given the power to cleanse and purify his being; only seek he must, and relying on his soul attain to perfection.

Sri Aurobindo clearly points out what should be the bases of yoga for its secure development:

"The first thing needed is quiet in the mind."[4]

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 63. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 553. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 635.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"A quiet mind does not mean that there will be no thoughts or mental movements at all, but that these will be on the surface and you will feel your true being within separate from them, observing but not carried away, able to watch and judge them and reject all that has to be rejected and to accept and keep to all that is true consciousness and true experience."[1]

"The important thing is to get rid of the habit of the invasion of troubling thoughts, wrong feelings, confusion of ideas, unhappy movements. These disturb the nature and cloud it and make it difficult for the Force to work; when the mind is quiet and at peace, the Force can work more easily."[2]

"At first the peace and calm are not continuous, they come and go and it usually takes a long time to get them settled in the nature. It is better therefore to avoid impatience and to go on steadily with what is being done. If you wish to have something beyond the peace and calm, let it be the full opening of the inner being and the consciousness of the Divine Power working in you. Aspire for that sincerely and with a great intensity but without impatience and it will come."[3]

"The quiet consciousness of peace you now have in the mind must become not only calm but wide. You must feel it everywhere, yourself in it and all in it. This also will help to bring the calm as a basis into the action."[4]

"Equality is a very important part in this yoga; it is necessary to keep equality under pain and suffering — and that means to endure firmly and calmly, not to be restless or troubled or depressed or despondent, to go on with a steady faith in the Divine Will. But equality does not include inert acceptance. If, for instance, there is a temporary failure of some endeavour in the sadhana, one has to keep equality, not to be troubled or despondent, but one has not to accept the failure as an indication of the Divine Will and give up the endeavour. You ought rather to find out the reason and meaning of the failure and go forward in faith towards victory."[5]

These steps on the path of yoga look very simple in words but in the actual field of action the seeker is reminded and warned from time immemorial that this arduous adventure of seeking his soul is a path sharp like the razor's edge, full of pitfalls and unexpected dangers at every turn. Once the decision to follow the path has been taken, there should be no turning back. One has to consecrate one's whole being in order to pursue it till the end. This can only be done, as the Mother has pointed out, when one has kindled

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 635. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 637. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 889-90.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 657. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 664.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the Fire within. This Fire is kindled through constant aspiration and a turning within of all our being. Once the Fire is lit, it takes care of all our being and guides us through the darkness, consumes all our falsehood and ignorance; the more one feeds it with these elements the brighter it burns. It is the Fire that purifies and gives us enthusiasm and constant steadiness in our aspiration, that discerns and gives us the right judgment. Until that Fire is lit, the steady and sincere aspiration for the Divine Life is not effective. To quote from *Savitri*:

> "In this investiture of fleshly life
> A soul that is a spark of God survives
> And sometimes it breaks through the sordid screen
> And kindles a fire that makes us half-divine."[1]

Such a state comes only when the psychic is in the front and its light permeates the whole being and when we spontaneously recognize the Mother as the Divine Mother.

SPEECH BY OSCAR LÄSSER

"Don't you think that this subject is quite meaningless?" — a large majority of our modern intelligentsia will ask. In order for us to understand this objection, in a world still largely dominated by a so-called objective rational science which has as its gospel a camouflaged materialism, we have to know its mental make-up which is reflected in the ideas of logical positivism.

The meaning of our topic will be questioned on linguistic and psychological grounds. The title is undoubtedly a grammatically correct propostion but, whether we like it or not, it is regarded by some modern minds as a quite senseless combination of words. The positivist will point out with a self-satisfied smile that facts behind such a term as Divine Life cannot be verified by scientific means based on sense experience. Bertrand Russell not only discards metaphysical terms but questions even the value of induction-deduction: How can we be certain that, e.g., Cape Horn exists without experiencing it at the same time? he asks boldly. He concludes that sense experience as a means of real knowledge has to be discarded because we never can know the thing in itself through sense experience, meaning that we are always confined to surface knowledge. Thus modern science and thought are largely dominated by the principle of uncertainty and by a cold agnosticism.

It seems that few of the intelligentsia feel the need to transcend their

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Bk. II, Canto V, p. 169.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

present position in considering such a subject. They are content to restrict their search to a horizontal line, going round in perhaps widening but never-ending circles, with the excuse that the realm of matter has still infinite secrets which must be discovered.

The open-minded and unprejudiced scientist should however accept our proposal of conducting experiments on an ascending line. Thus we can take the experience of the Divine Life or Consciousness, which gives us the key to all spirituality, as a working hypothesis which is to be verified and experimented upon by following the supraphysical processes and laws given by realised yogis.

I suppose that most of the modern spiritual seekers are in a somewhat similar state: the Divine Life or Consciousness is for them not yet an unshakable experience and spiritual reality but a hypothesis which is based on some touch or inspiration or glimpse of a higher reality and in which they have immense faith.

Until we realise our goal of the Divine Life, *faith* is the Alpha and Omega of our spiritual journey. This faith in some spiritual truth supported by an iron will and a burning aspiration has to surpass the ordinary faith of men of action, discoverers, inventors, creators of knowledge, who go on until the proof is found or the action is done in spite of disappointment, failure, denial or mockery. Those who want to be successful in their spiritual endeavour have to stick to the *mantra*: "I will go on till I succeed — all difficulties notwithstanding."[1] The believer in the Divine will add: "The Divine exists, my following after the Divine cannot fail. I will go on through everything till I find Him."[2]

What, then, is this Divine Life we want to achieve? I don't think that it can be described fully in mental terms. According to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, it will *not* be an escape from life into some Christian Paradise or Buddhist Nirvana or into the Nirguna Brahman of the Vedantins. The Divine Life stands for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth and for our transformation into gnostic beings, free from ego, falsehood and ignorance, after the Supermind has established itself in matter.

In order to progress towards that lofty and mentally quite inconceivable goal, personal *Freedom* seems to be indispensable.

A spiritual seeker may tend to dismiss and throw overboard all the old religious dogmas, moral and ethical codes, social traditions, etc., which hamper and stifle our inner and outer growth. I recently heard the exclamation: "We want to achieve something *new* and not that *old* stuff which has miserably failed." However, let us not forget that moral standards were and still are an important and purifying factor for most people who lead an

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 573.
[2] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ordinary life. Before considering ourselves to be above morality let us make very sure that we can stand the freedom which can be our greatest helper but also our greatest enemy. Personal liberty implies, paradoxical as it might sound, a very severe self-discipline. Without this self-discipline we are likely to stumble into a deep pit, as the prey of a hotch-potch of surrounding forces predominantly vital and ignorant. This applies in variable degree to all persons not yet spiritually mature. The phrase, "Surrender to the Mother and everything will be done for you," will offer no refuge and protection for a passive and tamasic surrender leading nowhere.

The Mother wrote recently on self-discipline: "Sans discipline on ne peut rien faire de bon dans la vie, même dans la vie ordinaire — mais pour la vie spirituelle il faut une *discipline rigoureuse* pour avancer même d'un pas."[1] In cases of exhaustion and depression she advises not to pay any attention to such a condition and to continue one's programme and discipline as usual in order to regain one's balance as quickly as possible.

Sincerity, Humility, and Simplicity also are basic requisites of the path. Sri Aurobindo writes in one of his letters: "There is one indispensable condition, sincerity."[2] What does the Mother mean by sincerity? "Sincerity means to lift all the movements of the being to the level of the highest consciousness and realisation already attained." That is a hard job indeed. The ego, with the vital mind and a servile pseudo-intelligence as its allies, seems to be the main cause of our insincerity.

Our aspiration towards the goal must be intense, calm and strong. An inward calm and tranquillity and the cultivation of concentration are the first condition of any yoga. A silent receptive mind is indispensable for any marked progress on the path.

Sri Aurobindo says in *The Synthesis of Yoga* that four aids help us in our aspiration towards the Divine Life. First, the *Shastra* or the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation. The heard or written word of a Guru or a scripture, the study of some path leading to realisation or our acquaintance with the lives of saints or yogis can serve as useful sign-posts.

Next comes a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by the knowledge: *utsāha*. It is certain that an ardent aspiration and faith in the Divine help to progress, but patience, thoroughness and persistence in the method are also needed.

The third aid is that of the *Guru*, his direct teaching, example and influence.

"Last comes the instrumentality of Time — *kāla*; for in all things there

[1] "Without discipline one can do nothing worthwhile in life, even in the ordinary life — but for the spiritual life a rigorous discipline is needed in order to take even one step forward."

[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 560.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement."[1] Time is the instrument of the Divine and the soul, but to our ego it might appear as a tyrant or as a resistance.

However, let's always keep in mind that according to Sri Aurobindo "the supreme Shastra of the integral Yoga is the eternal Veda secret in the heart of every thinking and living being."[2] Thus nothing can be really taught as everything is already contained within us, waiting its term to reveal itself. The sole purpose of the Shastra is to bring to light the secret knowledge within. In exceptional cases the inner divine guidance alone might be sufficient.

Self-consecration and self-surrender of the individual to the Divine is of major importance. Sri Aurobindo speaks of two movements with a transitional stage between them. The first is the process of surrender, the second is the crown and consequence of the first: a blissful state of identity with the Divine will, joy and power. In the period of surrender the individual prepares himself to receive the Divine through the instruments of his lower nature. The further we advance the more our personal, uninformed effort will dwindle away and will be replaced by the higher Nature and by the descent of the Divine Shakti. For a long time there will be both an effort from below and a descent and working from above in order to transform the ego. So long as the Divine Shakti is not fully working through our nature, a continual and always repeated refusal of the impulsions and falsehood of our lower nature is essential.

I hope that I have made it sufficiently clear that an initial tremendous and steady effort, will and aspiration towards self-consecration and complete surrender are indispensable. According to our temperament we can choose between the two main currents leading to realisation; we may take the baby-cat attitude, realising our own impotence and putting our entire hope in the Divine Grace, yearning intensely for an opening to the divine working. This is perhaps the shortest and quickest road we can take. We might also choose the baby-monkey attitude which is based mainly on personal effort and stern tapasya.

In a letter Sri Aurobindo advises a disciple: "In your work and acts you must do the same as in your concentration. Open to the Mother, put them under her guidance, call in the peace, the supporting Power, the protection and, in order that they may work, reject all wrong influences that might come in their way by creating wrong, careless or unconscious movements."[3]

The best expression of aspiration for the Divine Life I find in the following aphorism of Sri Aurobindo:

"Discipleship to God the Teacher, sonship to God the Father, tenderness

[1] [2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 47.
[3] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 583.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of God the Mother, clasp of the hand of the divine Friend, laughter and sport with our Comrade and Boy-Playfellow, blissful servitude to God the Master, rapturous love of our divine Paramour, these are the seven beatitudes of life in the human body. Canst thou unite all these in a single supreme and rainbow-hued relation? Then hast thou no need of any heaven and thou exceedest the emancipation of the Adwaitin." [1]

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The problem before us is a problem of psychological preparedness. It is not a moral question; neither can any occult opening or capacity, or any religious trend give us the needed sincerity and aspiration. It is essentially a question of turning and finally changing the consciousness, so that this may give us as direct consequence sincerity and a longing for the life of the spirit. A new orientation of consciousness can alone effect the total and all-embracing change. No exterior effort or endeavour born from Tapasya can give us this. No outer regulations, laws or moral discipline can make us prepare for this single-minded effort. For, now we are facing a new world, a new Light, a new consciousness which makes obsolete the values, standards and methods of the past. We on our part must awake to the call the new descent has clarioned forth from the summit. We need therefore other ways, other means, other modes of working and a renewed consciousness.

But the path of the change of consciousness is not easy, nor can we attempt to tread that way in a casual and half-hearted manner. It needs a vigilant heart, a sleepless mind, a purified vital being and a strong physical foundation. It calls for a constant living on the highest level of consciousness to which we have attained; it also means a vast patience and steadiness against the inevitable odds that always face us when we decide once for all to leave our ancient moorings of lower nature.

But how can this be done? The problem has two interlinked factors: a personal issue and a universal question. We are part of the cosmic whole; we are helped by its growth and evolution but also its retarding conditions of ignorance pull us down, make us unsteady and insincere. This is a peril hard to avoid. But it is exactly to counteract this evil (along with so many others) that this Ashram was created, so that at least we had less chance of contamination, being a closed and well-guarded human nucleus of a society. And yet we are not totally cut off from the universal current — this sea is always around us. If we had to wait, along with the rest of humanity, till the world-conditions were favourable, we might have to wait for a millennium or more.

[1] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent Ed., Vol. 17), p. 137.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

On the other hand, the pressing call of the spirit is upon us, goading us to surpass our little surface existence, conditions and values. At the same time we cannot leave the world entirely and confine ourselves to our small body of society, for the world lives with us, so long as we live in the world. In spite of the spiritual light that guards us, we cannot escape its influence. Also the world must progress along with us, if our progress is to be integral. And if we progress, we further the progress of the world as a constituent unit of the cosmic existence. Thus the two go hand in hand in one sense and in another are separate entities.

We cannot be steady and sincere by our own personal effort alone. Although personal effort plays a cardinal role, its effectivity depends on the divine grace. Let us not have this misconception, that personal effort alone can effect all and fulfil everything. It is only the prerequisite condition, the first necessary step.

A strong central will, the positive sign of the working of the Divine in us, must be at the base of all our efforts. A will born from ambition or desire, or for personal gain, however veiled, will be found ineffective. Such will has its origin in our ego, selfishness and ignorance. It cannot light our path, guide our steps, but only bring to us the sense of frustration and decline at the end. On the other hand, a selfless will to follow this path at any cost, without any hidden motive of self-seeking or interest is the unmistakable sign that we are called to the path and chosen as the emerging nucleus of the future race.

We must be open to the source above us; this alone can give the needed strength and fortitude, the requisite basis of equilibrium and patience. If we open alternately to the higher divine influence and the lower forces, a shifting of balance would be the result and then it could not be said that we were either sincere or steady. Also if we dally with the vain hope that we have nothing to do once we are here, and ask the Divine to do our labour of rejection and surrender, then we shall only fall into the Tamas of the lower nature. What we need to do is to keep a vigilant eye on our psychological conditions, and never relax the effort until we are self-consecrated enough, when the Divine can work in us unhindered. But till then we must not relax. But which part of our being can truly supervise the working of our nature? Surely not our vital being or our reason, which themselves are swayed by desires, preferences, ambitions and a host of other traits of the lower nature. The soul in us must be allowed to take charge of the workings of our life, mind and body — for it is the delegate of the Divine in us, and to it we must turn for the right conditions of opening to the Divine on the one hand and a rejection of the false movements on the other.

To be precise, there must be an overcoming of the lower movements of desires, attachments, habits, angers, crookednesses, disharmonies, and all other perversions, first by growing conscious of them, then by rejecting them

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and calling down the right movement, the right attitude and the right opening.

The mind must be trained to be quiet, wide, undisturbed, a witness self. The life must be trained to occupy itself with higher movements, richer actions, deeper sensibilities; and last the body, the basis of all human existence, must be made to learn to outgrow its Tamas, fixed habits and rigidity, thus becoming a plastic instrument of the soul and the Divine.

But the process of this change, as many erroneously consider it, is not to sit down in meditation or to lead a retired life of physical inaction, which may result in the following of a narrow cycle of closed ineffective existence. Rather all movements must be made an occasion for self-offering and dedication, for the elevation of consciousness, till at the end we feel all our actions become attuned with the Divine Will and we become the happy channels of its splendid outpour.

But no opening can come unless we have heard the call and have an unswerving faith, a living and dynamic sincerity and an unflinching steadfastness. For the hour has come when lesser issues must be cast aside; a striding and sure foot must be put out in front. For *here* and *now* is the opportunity that may never come in a millennium or perhaps in the whole history of humanity. We, as the standard-bearers of to-morrow, must rise and answer the call that has been given to us and follow the golden road to the greatest realisation.

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

The question has a special bearing upon all those who have centrally decided to lead the divine life. And it is of particular importance at the present moment when unsteadiness, or lack of faith or of interest in the divine life, seems to be gaining ground.

The question is quite an intricate one inasmuch as we must have a first-hand knowledge or an idea at least, as to what the divine life is, what leads us to aspire for this life, the difficulties that we may have to confront in our way of aspiration to tread along this path, as well as the conditions which we are needed to fulfil to keep our aspiration ever steady and sincere.

Literally, the divine life may be interpreted as the life for the Divine, i.e., to take the Divine as our life's aim, to consecrate all our actions in life as an offering to the Divine, to direct all our thoughts and feelings to one goal — the Divine. Or, we may also interpret it as the kind of life which the Divine would like each one of us to live according to the need of each soul that aspires for a rapid and revolutionary progress instead of a slow and

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

gradual evolution of Nature. Whichever interpretation may be appropriate, we are sure that the divine life corresponds to a much higher order of life where the consciousness is much more elevated and illumined than what it is in ordinary life which people normally live. Ordinary life is, generally speaking, the mundane way of life having certain religious codes and dogmas. In this way of life we live more on the surface with our superficial and egoistic nature in front than in our true being deep within, our true and inner nature. "To look into ourselves and see and enter into ourselves and live within is the first necessity for transformation of nature and for the divine life,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo. Harmony and beauty, peace and serenity, light and freedom, are the traits that mark the divine life or the spiritual way of life. In fact, living the divine life is living altogether in a different dimension of existence insofar as the level of consciousness is concerned. To express the inner and secret divinity through our nature and consciousness, in every walk of life, through all our ways and movements or, in short, to effect a radical transformation of our nature and consciousness is our aim and endeavour in the divine way of life: To quote Sri Aurobindo, "A growth into a divine consciousness is the whole meaning of our yoga, an integral conversion to divinity not only of the soul but of all the parts of our nature."[2]

It is an arduous task requiring a firm resolution, an unflagging zeal and an untiring patience.

We must aspire for the divine life in all sincerity and faithfulness; and we must try to maintain an inner steadiness and poise in our aspiration in order to make it effective.

"Sincerity is the key of the divine doors,"[3] says the Mother. The aspiration that constantly burns deep within and rises like a steady and unwavering flame can alone be said to be true and sincere. A flagging aspiration or the aspiration that fluctuates cannot properly be regarded as sincere or stable.

In this connection it is well worth mentioning what is the true significance of the terms 'sincerity' and 'steadiness'. True sincerity means focussing the attention of our whole being and consciousness, and directing all our efforts and endeavours towards one goal, our true aim in life. As we find in the Upanishads,

शरवत् तन्मयो भवेत्

"One must be absorbed into That as an arrow is lost in its target."[4]

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1027.
[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 83. [3] *Words of the Mother*, 4th Series, p. 5.
[4] Mundaka Upanishad, Chap. II, Sec. II, 4. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *Eight Upanishads*, p. 111.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

And steadiness means a constancy or a continuity in our aspiration and endeavour for our life's aim. In fact, the quality of steadiness is naturally implied in that of sincerity. If we are truly sincere it is understood we are steady also at the same time. But it is extremely difficult to be truly sincere. Partial sincerity, or sincerity that vacillates between truth and untruth, is no sincerity at all.

How then to get at the perfect sincerity, and bring about a balance and steadiness in our aspiration? It can be made possible, if we always remember, in all that we do, think, feel or speak, by being in a way inwardly conscious, the ideal to be pursued, the goal to be reached. It is then a living aspiration vibrant with a deep spiritual fervour.

But why can't we always keep up this burning zeal in our aspiration? What are the impediments that crop up in our way of a steady and sincere aspiration for the divine life? Let us consider the question from this angle.

One thing that shows itself out is that we are evidently not truly serious or keen on leading the divine life. Or, even though some part in us may be fully inclined towards this life, there are other parts — and larger in number — which are quite indifferent, having rather a bent more for the desires and enjoyments of the ordinary life. And more often than not it is the inferior elements in us that get the upper hand. And quite naturally instability creeps in within us, and insincerity follows in its wake.

Another obstruction which we are likely to encounter in our way of aspiration may result from a lack of proper faith in the divine life. This is the cardinal defect. And along with the faltering faith our sincerity also fumbles.

Also, normally we are not willing in the least to sacrifice our creature comforts for the sake of a better and spiritual life. We live, on the contrary, in a happy-go-lucky fashion leaving the entire burden and responsibility of our aim and aspiration to the Divine for adjustment. This is nothing but sheer insincerity. In fact, to play fast and loose with life may ultimately prove dangerous.

Another factor which comes to our notice is that our thoughts and preoccupations are at times too much outward-diverted which causes a diffusion and dissipation of our consciousness, whereas to maintain a steady and sincere aspiration for the divine life we are expected to get more and more indrawn and centralised. "The whole foundation of the gnostic life must be by its very nature inward and not outward,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo.

Then, mental preferences, vital obstinacy and physical inertia constitute a serious handicap thwarting a smooth and one-pointed aspiration for the divine life.

Quite another factor that brings itself to our gaze is the possibility that because of the difficulties and disadvantages of the path a state of despair and

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1019.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

despondency may take hold of us, as a result of which our aspiration may suffer a considerable setback.

Then a glaring factor which makes itself felt is: if we harbour behind our apparently sincere aspiration some personal demand or grudge, or hanker after some personal gain or achievement, then our aspiration is sure to culminate in a final frustration.

These are the many stumbling-blocks in our way jeopardising our steady and sincere aspiration for the divine life. Thus our aspiration diminishes in intensity and gradually dwindles.

So now, how to counteract these defects and drawbacks of our nature and gradually arrive at a state of flaming aspiration for the divine life?

Well, the first step towards this should be to wake up and be conscious, उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत, as the Upanishads proclaim, — conscious of the various impediments that our own nature presents before us and which we will have to fight and surmount, and conscious also of our high and unique aim, i.e., a complete reversal of consciousness in life itself which we must strive to achieve; "here, in life, on earth, in the body, — *ihaiva*, as the Upanishads insist, — we have to unveil the Godhead,"[1] declares Sri Aurobindo. We must be earnest about our life's aim, careful to avoid at the same time too undue a haste which amounts to a lack of patience and steadiness. This will intensify our aspiration, heighten our sincerity and strengthen our inner stability.

Then, our aspiration to be steady and sincere must be anchored on our faith in the final triumph of the Divine over falsehood and obscurity. The faith must be spontaneous and deep-rooted, unhampered by doubt and disbelief, unmoved in the changing circumstances of life.

Another important point. If we really mean to adhere to the divine life, we should try to be spiritually minded. We must be ready to give up the most common and material comforts and enjoyments which the ordinary life offers us to the complete detriment of our divine way of life. The eventualities of mundane life should not be allowed to encroach upon our steady and sincere aspiration.

And it will be well to get ourselves accustomed to regular meditation with a view to silencing the mind which is essential for maintaining a steadiness and sincerity in our aspiration for the divine life; "without this inwardness, this spiritual origination, in a too externalised consciousness or by only external means, no greater or divine life is possible,"[2] writes Sri Aurobindo. We should pray for peace and equanimity to permeate our whole being and nature. This will greatly help us in organising the different parts of our being centering round the psychic being. "It is the psychic that gives the

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 68.
[2] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1020.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

true aspiration,"[1] affirms Sri Aurobindo. And with this end in view we should try to collect ourselves in a serene and silent concentration.

Another condition which is indispensable is a conscious and willed control over our thoughts and speech, our impulses and actions so as not to allow the obstacles of our mental and vital as well as physical nature to sidetrack our steady and sincere aspiration for the divine life.

A word regarding the difficulties that besiege us in our way of aspiration. Difficulties are natural and inevitable in any great or high enterprise of life. The existence of difficulties should be no reason to deter us from our aspiration for the divine life. Difficulties and reverses, instead of overpowering us, should be taken as occasions and opportunities for taking a big and bold stride forward. They should be, in fact, thrown as incentives in the fire of aspiration which will burn all the brighter. "In the unseen providence of things our greatest difficulties are our best opportunities. A supreme difficulty is Nature's indication to us of a supreme conquest to be won and an ultimate problem to be solved,"[2] Sri Aurobindo tells us. It is not depression and disappointment but courage and confidence that are needed to face them. Not to court defeat but to conquer is our mission. If we can go in life with this attitude, then indeed, we shall find it easier to keep our aspiration for the divine life ever steady and sincere.

Lastly, the sole aim of our aspiration for the divine life should be to exceed ourselves or to transform our consciousness. In other words, our aspiration should be for the sake of the Divine alone, without our cherishing any personal or egoistic motive behind, if we mean to be truly sincere, and if we want our effort to be crowned with success. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "If we seek the Divine, it should be for the sake of the Divine and for nothing else, because that is the supreme call of our being, the deepest truth of the spirit."

So these are some of the conditions and prerequisites by way of accelerating our aspiration for the divine life along with a bid to make us steady and sincere therein.

Still, we must always remember that this path is not smooth and easy — far from it; in the words of the Upanishads,

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ॥

"Sharp as a razor's edge, hard to traverse, difficult of going is that path, say the sages."[3]

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 568.

[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 7.

[3] *Katha Upanishad*, Cycle I, Ch. III, Verse 14, Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent .Ed., Vol. 12), p. 252.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

And we need to strain every nerve and muscle to attain a state of perfect steadiness and sincerity. Aspiration itself is a virtue which it is hard to keep ever burning in our present state of consciousness; along with the varying moods of our imperfect nature it tends to flicker like an unsteady flame, and so often it gets totally obscured in the mist of ignorance to which our nature is prone. The adverse forces are always alert to seize on any conceivable opportunity to shatter our aspiration and disintegrate us. What is most needed is a resolute will instinct with an ever wakeful vigilance and attended by patience, perseverance and endurance. "Resolution is the one thing required — resolution is the master key,"[1] says the Mother.

Along with self-confidence and a quiet strength within, we must have a complete trust and reliance on the Divine's transforming Grace. We must open ourselves in a spontaneous self-giving to the Divine's guiding Light and Force, and pray for the intervention of the Grace in a receptive silence. With will and perseverance aided by the Divine's unfailing Grace nothing is ultimately impossible. As the Mother assures us, "Persist in your aspiration and it will be fulfilled."[2]

SPEECH BY SELVI SIVA

To strengthen and to purify our aspiration, we must have an absolute faith in the Divine and we must be fully conscious of ourselves.

Perfect faith in the Divine can alone give assurance to the confidence in our aspiration. Sri Aurobindo says that an unshakable faith — pure, candid and perfect, not tainted by ego, ambition or self-will — can carry us in perfect security through all difficulties and obstacles.

This perfect faith is not a blind faith followed by fancy or through an impulse; it is not abstract, but a true and direct perception, a deep contact, a spontaneous identity with the divine Presence that is felt within or around us.

If the faith wavers, the slightest doubt can infect our being and the wrong suggestions find an easy way into us to shatter our aspiration.

This faith is not based on any mental reasoning but on a spontaneous feeling, sure and concrete, which can never mislead us. Armoured with faith, there is no fear of going astray. An integral and absolute faith can conquer all. It is not merely a force of mental thought and will; it is a deeper force which gives strength to our thoughts, feelings and movements. Then we feel everything as coming from the Divine.

[1] *Words of the Mother*, 3rd Series (1951), p. 9.
[2] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 234.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The Mother says: "An unshakable faith is a sign of the presence of the Divine Will." When the Divine Will supports us, what on earth can shake our aspiration?

Thus our burning aspiration can be guarded from every passing wind. But the flame must rise ever higher and brighter and purer. For that, we must be vigilant. To be sincere in our aspiration, the Mother says that we must be conscious of our nature and movements, we must know why and how we do things or feel or think them. We must stand back and understand the motives and impulses.

We need to be honest to ourselves, for the crude mind with its ignorant demands commits errors and passes wrong judgments. Our own judgment will testify to our sincerity. If we look clearly and more observantly at ourselves, we can discern the right way or the right motive from the wrong. And it is only in quietude and silence that we can judge ourselves rightly. To be sincere is to choose the way that is right for us, rejecting the false.

With that, our aspiration for the Divine Life will be made firm and ardent. The Mother has said: "When the resolution has been taken, when you have decided that the whole of your life shall be given to the Divine, you have still at every moment to remember it and carry it out in all the details of your existence.... You must feel at every step that you belong to the Divine."

With entire trust in her, just that remembrance, just that feeling is enough, —she will carry us through in our aspiration.

SPEECH BY SHOBHA MITRA

In order to be steady and sincere in our aspiration for the divine life, the most essential thing is to establish a contact with the soul or the psychic and try to remain in unison with it even in the midst of all outward activities because the true nature of the psychic is to turn Godwards, to accept nothing but Truth, to cling to all that is divine or progressing towards it. Naturally it is not easy to establish the contact with the psychic but with a silent and sincere prayer on our part and by the Grace of the Mother the contact and union become possible. And once the psychic is allowed to influence the nature, it acts like a flame of light which shows all that has to be changed in us, and purifies all our sensations, emotions and desires. Ultimately it burns away all that is ugly, narrow, base and undivine.

But do we allow the psychic to govern our lives, to do its work of transformation? We seldom do. And the greatest enemy that comes on the way is

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

desire — the desire to do this, to do that, to have this, to have that and so on. We must try to become free from desire. A day must come when we shall desire nothing, ask for nothing, wish for nothing but repeat these lines of Sri Aurobindo at every moment of our life:

"I have given my mind to be dug Thy channel mind,
I have offered up my will to be Thy will:
Let nothing in myself be left behind
In our union mystic and unutterable."[1]

Then will the psychic have direct control even over our outer activities. And this alone can ensure a constant steadiness and sincerity to find the Divine and be one with Him.

SPEECH BY TARUN BANERJI

Regarding sincerity I have nothing to say of my own; I will merely quote a passage from a letter by Sri Aurobindo which is a short and yet so explicit and categorical an answer, that it needs no explanation:

"To be absolutely sincere, straightforward, open, is not an easy achievement for human nature. It is only by spiritual endeavour that one can realise it — and to do it needs a severity of introspective self-vision, an unsparing scrutiny of self-observation of which many sadhaks and yogis even are not capable and it is only by an illumining Grace that reveals the sadhak to himself and transforms what is deficient in him that it can be done. And even then only if he himself consents and lends himself wholly to the divine working."[2]

In order that we may know how to be steady we had better first ask ourselves: why are we unsteady? What is it that forces our mind to vacillate, throwing it to and fro like a shuttlecock between the two poles of duality? Indeed the Mother has stated clearly: "By definition, the Ashramite has resolved to dedicate his life to the Divine Realisation."[3] Why then do we waver? True, at a certain exceptional moment we dedicated our life with resolution never to waver; at that moment at least we had uttered the solemn oath: we want the Divine and the Divine only. But no sooner did we utter

[1] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 143.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 561.
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1964, p. 98.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

it than we found ourselves struggling desperately to keep our promise. Why? Because of various reasons. Probably the oath was not genuine. Or perhaps together with the oath we dived headlong into the path of yoga without even pondering for a while to take into account the tremendous difficulties that await us. We did not take into account the ever-watchful sorrow and suffering and depression that may overwhelm us; we did not take into account the apparently unending length of the path, to traverse which we may have to spend our whole life and yet not reach it; or else we did not take into account the dire fact that to reach the Divine each and every movement of our thought and energy has to be utilised for that alone. And, above all, did we note with care the fact that a complete faith in the Divine Grace is indispensable to reach the end which comes but rarely? Thus without being prepared to meet these difficulties and a host of others, we easily collide against them and collapse, only to give ourselves up to resentments. This is the critical juncture where we may fall so low that we may doubt even the existence of the Divine, we may doubt our own capacity, and worst of all, we may turn away from our aspiration for the Divine Life to the gruesome and alluring call of the vital impulses. In other words, we become unsteady. But if we take a clear cognition of all the possible hazards of the path as we advance on it, then instead of staggering under their unexpected pressure or staring at them dully through our ignorant haze, we get ready, like Job in the Bible, by girding our loins to meet the challenge of each rebuff steadily with an undaunted courage. For then we know clearly that each and every inch of the way must be fought out for our triumphant entrance into the Kingdom of the Divine.

But a mere awareness of the difficulties of the path without the strength to fight the battle is not enough. And the strength can come with the right attitude. With one part of our mind we must feel suffocated by the shallowness of the human nature; the stronger this feeling, the better our chance for the success. With the other part we must love the Divine for the Divine's sake; again, the stronger our love, the better our chance to be steady. Steadiness will follow spontaneously if we can have the right attitude towards the Divine, which is best expressed as: "To want it, and to want only that."[1]

Once we embark on the voyage of divine discovery with this clear understanding and the right attitude and pure and whole-hearted love, then do we not carry with us the very source of steadiness? Do we then not know that the Divine who is our aim is also our guide, that he like the pole star shines ever brighter in the darkness of the night? And, pointing ever ahead, does he not whisper with full assurance? —

[1] The Mother, *Ibid.*, p. 102.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Rejoice and fear not for the waves that swell,
The storms that thunder, winds that sweep;
Always our Captain holds the rudder well,
He does not sleep."[1]

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 75.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THIRD SEMINAR

14 February 1965

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:

How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action.

"How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

"Those who wish to help the Light of Truth to prevail over the forces of darkness and falsehood, can do so by carefully observing the initiating impulses of their movements and actions, and discriminating between those that come from the Truth and those that come from the falsehood, in order to obey the first and to refuse or reject the others.

"This power of discrimination is one of the first effects of the Advent of the Truth's Light in the earth's atmosphere.

"Indeed it is very difficult to discriminate the impulses of Truth from the impulses of falsehood, unless one has received this special gift of discrimination that the Light of Truth has brought.

"However, to help at the beginning, one can take as a guiding rule that all that brings with it or creates peace, faith, joy, harmony, wideness, unity and ascending growth comes from the Truth; while all that carries with it restlessness, doubt, scepticism, sorrow, discord, selfish narrowness, inertia, discouragement and despair comes straight from the falsehood."

(*Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February, 1965, p. 89.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD IN THE IMPULSES OF ACTION

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The question that the Mother has put in the subject she has given for this Seminar would naturally remind us of her New Year Message this time: "*Salute to the advent of the Truth.*" That Truth is the supramental Truth, *Satyam*, whose reign upon earth will create the New Truth Age, the *Satya Yuga*, in the life of humanity. That Truth was born upon earth some nine years back, but it was an inner birth of its initial power in the earth's subtle secret layers. Since then it has been continuously growing in its plenitude and potency, and now it is emerging from that inner secrecy and is coming increasingly nearer the earth's outer physical layer to openly manifest and establish its reign in the external conditions of life. So the Mother has asked us to salute its advent.

But this salutation to the Truth, if it is to be sincere and effective, requires first and foremost its clear recognition and acceptance not only in our inner consciousness but also in all the actions of our life. For that it is indispensable that we should learn to discriminate precisely between the impulsions of that Truth and the promptings of falsehood that largely impel our actions at present.

For the aspirant of the New Life this is not merely a speculative theoretical question but a very practical urgent problem confronting him constantly in the concrete situations of life. At every moment he has to decide which particular course of action he shall adopt out of the several alternative ways that present themselves to him. That he can only do if he gets a distinct inner indication enabling him to clearly discriminate between the various impulses to action that come to him and the sources from which they originate. Unless he develops an assured faculty to have this true discernment he may be misled in spite of his right intentions.

The aspirant of the Truth-Life would wish to follow in his actions not the obscure promptings of his desires and passions, nor the half-lit indications of his groping ignorant mind, both of which can be agents of falsehood, but only the impulsions of the Truth-Consciousness. For it is imperatively necessary for him to thoroughly cast away all falsehood from his consciousness and life if he is to be totally transfigured in the supramental Truth whose advent upon earth is now so visibly and concretely close that the Mother has asked us to salute it. That salutation, if it is not to be merely a formal insincere greeting, but a whole-hearted acceptance in his entire life, making

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

that Truth a real and effective power initiating and governing all his actions, needs as its indispensable condition a precise discrimination between the impulses that come from it and those others that come from falsehood. How shall he do it? This is the most urgent and practical problem confronting him at the present moment, when the issue between the forces of falsehood that have till now reigned upon earth and the new Powers of Truth that are emerging to vanquish them, has reached its acutest tension. Each one has to make his choice, for on it depends his and humanity's destiny.

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

This is really a very difficult problem, so much that seekers in the past have often avoided it by refraining from action altogether. To be able to distinguish Truth from falsehood in the impulses of action one has to be a real yogi, not attached in any way to the action or its result, but conscious of the source from which the impulse comes and therefore undertaking it simply because it has to be done.

Of course we cannot hope to sit in meditation half our lives and achieve this aim as soon as we get into action after that. This is something that has to grow with our consciousness and like everywhere else we must be ready to face innumerable failures and half-successes, because the perfect end cannot be reached till the whole consciousness is changed. Every unregenerated part likes to have its own way, thus throwing its dark drag on any impulse to action, however true it may be. But we have to act keeping in mind our aim and trying to be sincere about it; then we shall learn. As Sri Aurobindo says, "By action, by works, not by inaction comes the knowledge and the release."[1]

First we have to learn to step back from the stream of action. Each one finds his own way to do this. For people who are active, capable and eager to do something on their own, one way is to tell themselves, and really understand, that even without them all the work they are doing would have been done —and perhaps better! —if it is something that really needs to be done. Another way is to feel that external action is not the only thing we are on earth to accomplish: there is a deeper being we have to discover and live in, a greater Power we must know and submit to, or we shall be lost in our doing. ... Then, we have to decide, once for all, never to act on lower impulses, never to act under a stress of emotion because at such moments our judgment is clouded and we can never be at our best.

As a third step, which need not come after the other two but rather grows along with them, we must try to trace the source or really at first the motive

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 169.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of the action. For, usually at the beginning we do the thing and look back at it. We have here to differntiate between the various parts of our being and to distinguish their vibrations. Gradually we learn to stand back quietly before undertaking anything and get first the inner sanction. When we are sufficiently developed within we simply follow the fine perception in the heart which discerns the right from the wrong.... But if this is the only way at our disposal it is a very tricky one. Because until we are absolutely sure of our contact with the soul we cannot be certain of our judgment. Misinterpretations are bound to come, coloured by our mental notions, vital desires and ambitions, physical and collective habits.... Luckily, along with this, a simpler verification is open to us: to judge by the Mother's presence and guidance, in all sincerity to abide by the rule she herself has given us, "Never do anything that you cannot do in front of me without feeling embarrassed, never say anything that you cannot repeat to me without difficulty."[1]

No rigid moral or mental rule can be set because each individual's law of action and requirements are different. To try and discover what that dharma is seems to be the first pointer to true action for an individual. All that helps to work out that aim of our being will be the true action for us, whatever it may be by human standards. We have simply to fulfil in an ever-growing inner and outer perfection the role we are to play in this life. The result we must leave in the hands of the Divine Director who will guide us through the play with the right cues and the apparently unforeseen action. In Sri Aurobindo's words, "Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper."[2]

There is one sign which helps in this judgment: if we act under an impulse which is not right we feel concerned, restless and oppressed by the responsibility of the result which seems to be ours; but, whenever we do something prompted by a true impulse we are filled with a joy deep, pure and elevating, an inexhaustible energy flows into us widening our consciousness and making us do the action more as an instrument than as the doer.

SPEECH BY BRAJKISHORE SINGH

When we look for the motive-force in ordinary human life, we perceive only a certain automatism. All seems to be driven from below, by the million-rhythmed impulse of Nature, as if imparted at the beginning of creation. And no one knows to what pastures she is driving life. Truth has no meaning

[1] A free rendering of the Mother's original in French. See *Quelques Paroles, Quelques Prières*, p. 54.

[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 111.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

here, apart from what habit gives it. In a life whose motives are shifting quicksands, where truth is a word-mask worn by all that is merely hunger, devouring, satisfaction, where shall we hope to find a meaning to the word?

It is only when, fed up with this double-faced Nature that cheats and laughs, we look for a path that may lead beyond her, to a point that is steady in all that is revolving, that the word "truth" begins to acquire a meaning. For, then among the actions, we do distinguish those that draw us closer to the path, nearer to the central point, however dim, and those that draw away. Hence, for him who follows the way, every act may be significantly charged with "right or wrong", "real or unreal", "true or false". Of course, we soon discover that it is not the act in itself that is true or false, but the attitude with which it is done. If we have to remain on the path, we have to be very sincere to ourselves. For, truth and falsehood will appear in a million ways one, when egoism and desire blind us. The greater part of us that belongs to Nature still responds to impulses without knowing their purpose. They lead us astray and we lose sight of the ideal.

Impulses have almost always a blinding effect. We cannot discriminate while acting under an impulse. Of course, we know the truth or falsehood retrospectively, by the result. A true action brings peace, strength, happiness, confidence; while a false one frustrates and weakens the will. If we have to discriminate before an impulse has wrought its havoc, so that the knowledge is effective, we have to know our nature and the forces that move us. If we recognise a false vibration at a distance, by the uneasiness, fear or sudden depression it might cause, we have to stop it there, and reject from within us all that could respond to it. We have at the same time to train ourselves to reject all fear, because it invites the very object it dreads.

If we recognise the false vibration (by its possessiveness that weakens, nervous tension, feeling of emptiness or sinking or disintegrating) after it has invaded us, we must suppress with our conscious will all temptation to express it in speech or action and wait until the storm passes. This "tapas" will soon turn into force and quiet understanding. It will give us the perception and strength to reject it better the next time. The first few seconds are very important. The temptation comes in the form of the false impulse justifying itself as true. But if we have held well, it is easier to perceive its falsity and to reject it than we imagine. There can be certitude of truth in an action only when it radiates from the central being. That act alone brings delight and freedom. If we are sincere, we can always perceive as to what we should do. When such indication is not clear, we must silently wait, instead of fretting or jumping to an impulsive movement. These can be the most fruitful moments of preparation and gathering.

A constant vigilance is required on our part. The possibilities of error dog all along the path. They are magnified in moments of crises and up-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

heavals. This happens not only in the life of the individual but also in collective life. Forces that have not had an opportunity surge up, churning the masses of men, spouting and foaming and frothing, challenging with the ghost-figures of ideal and justice that fill the sky. The mere power may confound even those that stand for truth. It is mistaken for inspiration that leads men and masses to their destiny.

Yet there is a fundamental difference between the two. That which surges from below is always a force of disintegration. It works for all that is opposed to order. Whereas when Mahakali with her Truth-Force possesses men, she cannot lead them to their perdition even though her action is temporarily destructive. She not only enforces her will, but leaves the touch of the infinite and the vast. There is a classical sculpture of Shiva destroying the Asuras. On his lips can be traced not wrath, but a serene smile, proceeding from the stillness of his trance.

One who is seeking to master Nature cannot let her impulses drive him. If man has to fulfil his divinity through Nature, he has to discover another status from where he can act upon her. In order to break away from this impulsive life, certain disciplines used to advocate inaction. But that did not raise the instrument, it only put it aside. Periods of inaction could certainly help to observe our own nature. But parallel and more positive must be the regular stress of a steady will upon the instrument.

SPEECH BY MANOJ DAS GUPTA

I would first like to draw your attention to a small orthographic consideration which I am sure has not escaped your keen scrutiny. The Mother in the subject she has given us for this Seminar ("How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action") has written 'Truth' with a capital T. Now it is of capital importance that we understand first what this Truth (with a capital T) is; for then, and only then, can we judge if a certain impulse of action is true or false, that is to say, if it is in accordance or not with the Truth.

Obviously the Mother is not referring to any social, moral or metaphysical truth. Indeed it would seem that the Divine delights in going, more often than not, counter to all notions of morality. Did not the Lord on the battlefield of Kurukshetra command Arjuna, when seized with an all too apparent pious intention of refraining from all slaughter, "Arise, slay thy enemies, enjoy a prosperous kingdom"? One might well speculate on what the Gita would have to tell us if Gandhiji were to be Arjuna's charioteer. But speculations apart, the point we have to bear in mind is this

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

that what is proposed to us is a way of life based on a spiritual truth and not on any moral, social or metaphysical truth. Sri Aurobindo categorically says:

"It is equally ignorant and one thousand miles away from my teaching to find it in your relations with human beings, or in the nobility of the human character or an idea that we are here to establish mental and moral and social Truth and justice on human and egoistic lines. I have never promised to do anything of the kind. Human nature is made up of imperfections, even its righteousness and virtue are pretensions, imperfections and prancings of a self-approbatory egoism .... What is aimed at by us is a spiritual truth as the basis of life, the first words of which are surrender and union with the Divine and the transcendence of ego. So long as that basis is not established, a sadhak is only an ignorant and imperfect human being struggling with the evils of the lower nature." [1]

We would do well to remember in this connection that the spiritual truth which we are seeking here is the highest that has yet been realised upon earth, about the nature of which Sri Aurobindo says:

"First of all, there is undoubtedly a Truth one and eternal which we are seeking, from which all other truth derives, by the light of which all other truth finds its right place, explanation and relation to the scheme of knowledge. But precisely for that reason it cannot be shut up in a single trenchant formula, it is not likely to be found in its entirety or in all its bearings in any single philosophy or Scripture or uttered altogether and for ever by any one teacher, thinker, prophet or Avatar. Nor has it been wholly found by us if our view of it necessitates the intolerant exclusion of the truth underlying other systems; for when we reject passionately, we mean simply that we cannot appreciate and explain." [2]

Friends, it would seem that we are put in a quandary. For so long as we do not realise the Truth how shall we discriminate between Truth and falsehood? Or are we to suppose that we can do away with all notions of morality since we profess to be bound by none? We should then be like the person Sri Aurobindo describes in his incomparable humourous style in the poem "Self":

"He said, 'I am egoless, spiritual, free,'
Then swore because his dinner was not ready.

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1964, p. 14.
[2] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent Ed., Vol 13), p. 2.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

I asked him why. He said, 'It is not me,
But the belly's hungry god who gets unsteady.' "[1]

And when the poet questions further,

"He answered, 'I can understand your doubt.
But to be free is all. It does not matter
How you may kick and howl and rage and shout,
Making a row over your daily platter.

To be aware of self is liberty,
Self I have got and, having self, am free.' "[2]

Well, I am afraid that the Mother would not have free souls of the above type around her for the great change she is working out in the terrestrial evolution. She bids us rise *above* all morality and not sink below it, and for this a greater self-discipline is required. She asks us to follow the soft voice of the psychic which, being in constant relation with the Truth, can alone lead us by the Right Path, *ṛtasya panthā*. In her own words:

"The voice of the ordinary consciousness is a moral voice which distinguishes between good and bad, encourages us towards the good, forbids us to do the bad. This is very useful in ordinary life, until the moment when one can be aware of one's psychic being and allow oneself to be entirely guided by it, that is to say, raise oneself above the ordinary humanity, free oneself from all egoism and become a conscious instrument of the Divine Will. The Soul, itself being a portion of the Divine, is above all moral notions, it bathes in the Divine Light and manifests it, but can truly rule over the whole being only when the ego has been dissolved."[3]

Before I conclude I would like to quote a few lines from *Prières et Méditations de la Mère*. The Mother says in one of her prayers:

"Il est impossible que dans toute action terrestre il n'y ait pas un bon et un mauvais côté. Même les actions qui expriment le mieux la loi d'Amour la plus divine contiennent en elles quelque chose du désordre et de l'ombre inhérents au monde tel qu'il est actuellement...."[4]

[1] [2] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 151.
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1963, p. 19.
[4] "It is impossible that in every terrestrial action there should not be a good and a bad side. Even the actions which best express the divine law of Love contain in them something of the disorder and darkness inherent in the world as it is at present...."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

She further says in the same prayer:

"Puisque tout est mélangé forcément dans la manifestation actuelle, le plus sage est de faire de son mieux, en s'efforçant vers une lumière toujours plus haute et de prendre son parti de ce que la perfection absolue soit pour le moment irréalisable.

"Avec quelle ardeur cependant ne faut-il pas aspirer toujours à cette inaccessible perfection! ..."[1] (23 March 1914)

Let us therefore call to our aid Agni, the divine Will-Force, and like the Rishi of the Upanishad invoke:

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम॥

"O god Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin. To thee completest speech of submission we would dispose."[2]

SPEECH BY MITA CHAKRAVARTI

The Mother once said, "We should be in no other service but in God's alone."[3] And that is the true, the only right action. To work for anyone else than God, to be under any servitude which is not Divine is false and wrong. To choose Truth constantly, to act according to the Divine's Will always, is the only fulfilment of life and nothing else matters.

This choice has to be made constantly at every moment. At every moment the sadhak stands before a crossing of dualities where he has to distinguish Truth from falsehood, the Divine from the undivine. Sometimes he has time to think and to ask the Mother, but most of the time he has to decide immediately, has to understand the real path. But how is it done, what is the way? That is the problem before us: "How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action?"

[1] "Since everything is necessarily mixed in the present manifestation, it is wisest to do our best, striving towards a higher and higher light, and to resign ourselves to the fact that absolute perfection is for the moment unrealisable.

"Still with what an ardour should we not always aspire towards this inaccessible perfection! ..."

[2] *Isha Upanishad*, Verse 18, Sri Aurobindo's translation. See Sri Aurobindo, *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 68.

[3] *Words of the Mother* (1944), p. 214.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The first essential condition is to have always a quiet undisturbed mind. Even in ordinary life a quiet mind is an absolute necessity in order to perform a work properly; in a sadhak's life it is more so. To remain quiet within, refusing to be carried away by the turmoil of ordinary thoughts or mental movements is the first step to be taken. To do otherwise is to encourage the confusion of consciousness, which does not allow the clarity of vision, which is necessary to distinguish between the true and the false and which is also the condition essential for the union with the Divine, the best and the only guide. So whatever may be the surface condition the inner poise must not be ruffled.

With this, equality is also an absolute necessity. As Sri Aurobindo says, "There can be no firm foundation in sadhana without equality, *samatā*."[1] The sadhak must face and endure every unpleasant situation "with a perfect calm and without any disturbing reaction."[2] He must not be restless or troubled or depressed and must go on with a steady faith in the Divine Will.

The next step towards a greater understanding is to be conscious of one's whole being. All the different parts of the sadhak's nature, all his movements, his feelings, thoughts and actions must be under his constant scrutiny. He must know and understand the motives and impulses behind his actions, all the forces hidden and apparent that move him. And above all he must be conscious of the divine part within him, the psychic which is present in everyone.

But he needs to be extremely alert and careful in finding and perceiving the divine impulsion from within, because his own concealed desires will try to cheat him constantly in the disguise of the Divine Will. So a constant checking and rechecking should be done which will not let pass a single doubtful thought or action.

When he arrives at such a state of consciousness it is not very difficult to distinguish between Truth and falsehood. The Mother says: "The Divine Will is not difficult to recognise. It is unmistakable. You can know it without being very far on the path. Only you must listen to its voice, the small voice that is here in the heart. Once you are accustomed to listen, if you do anything that is contrary to the Divine Will, you feel an uneasiness."[3] She also says: "You can easily know when a thing comes from the Divine. You feel free, you are at ease, you are in peace. But when something presents itself to you and you jump at it and cry out, 'Oh, at last I have it,' then you can know for certain that it does not come from the Divine."[4] So anything that shatters our inner peace and disturbs the equanimity of the inner mind is

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 662.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 663.
[3] *Conversations* (1971), p. 12.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

falsehood. The action that brings peace and calmness is truth.

But it is not sufficient to be conscious and to understand what is Truth. The sadhak must follow it too, — sincerely and steadily in order to remain in communion with the Divine. If the sadhak does not follow Truth the uneasiness in him continues for some time, then disappears and he loses his contact with the Divine. No amount of rationalization can deceive the Divine within. So once Truth and falsehood are discriminated the sadhak has to be firm in his will and follow Truth. All the vital and mental inertia or obscurity, which is not yet changed or not sufficiently changed, rises up to oppose it, for the Divine does not work to satisfy ego. So once the right is known from the wrong the sadhak has to work strictly up to his knowledge; he has to "resolutely reject one and accept the other."[1]

The practice of rejection prevails in the end but with the intervention of the Divine Force it becomes a much easier effort. The Mother's Force helps anyone who wants to change, wants to follow the right direction sincerely. So I feel the best way is to call in more and more the Divine Power and be governed and guided by it always. A sincere prayer and an ardent aspiration always bring down the Mother's help.

SPEECH BY PRITHWINDRA MUKHERJEE

The Mother in her *Commentaires sur le Dhammapada* has spoken of a fourfold discipline essential for our mental development, consisting of observing, watching, controlling and acquiring mastery over our thoughts.[2] Perhaps discrimination — the faculty to select or distinguish — is a stage intermediary between the second and the third, that is to say, between watching and controlling, rejection being a part of the latter.

Since the subject for the present Seminar is, "How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action," we must first make sure what Truth and falsehood mean. The Mother defines both, quite clearly as she says, "A falsehood is that which is not true, in the sense that it is not the expression of your truth — not at all — and yet, it is that of which you are most externally conscious. Very very few are there who have the inner perception of what they want to become, what they want to do, what the truth of their being is."[3]

The ordinary man acts usually under the impulses of his various physical,

[1] *Conversations* (1971), p. 5.

[2] La Mère, *Commentaires sur le Dhammapada* (1960), p. 2.

[3] From a Talk by the Mother as reported by Nolini Kanta Gupta in *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part Nine, p. 114.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

vital and mental needs, dominated more or less by nether truths that very often serve as masks for falsehood. But we here, who "grow in the house of Truth" — to borrow a Rig Vedic sentence — we at least must be "conscious of the much falsehood in the world", we who claim to be "the strong and invincible sons of Infinity".

"To be entirely sincere means," according to Sri Aurobindo, "to desire the divine Truth only." And our sole possible approach to that Truth is by the help of the yoga-force of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo about which Sri Aurobindo once wrote, "The yōga-force is always tangible and concrete in the way I have described and has tangible results. But it is invisible — not like a blow given or the rush of a motor car knocking somebody down which the physical senses can at once perceive. How is the mere physical mind to know that it is there and working?...One of two things it must be. Either it must allow the consciousness to go inside, to become aware of inner things, to believe in the experience of the invisible and the supraphysical, and then by experience, by the opening of new capacities, it becomes conscious of these forces and can see, follow and use their workings, just as the Scientist uses the unseen forces of Nature."[1]

Sri Aurobindo shows us the way as well to attain that consciousness:

"If you want the consciousness for true actions very much and aspire for it, it may come in one of several ways:

1. You may get the habit or faculty of watching your movements in such a way that you see the impulse to action coming and can see too its nature.

2. A consciousness may come which feels uneasy whenever a wrong thought or impulse to action or feeling is there.

3. Something within you may warn and stop you when you are going to do the wrong action."[2]

Our best method of action, therefore, should be to invoke the calm and discriminating yoga-force instead of acting under an impulse, for the Mother has warned us, "Do not act under an impulse. An impulsive person who cannot control himself has a disordered life."[3] And Sri Aurobindo has said, "To work in the calm ever-widening consciousness is at once a sadhana and a siddhi."[4]

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 219.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 693.
[3] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 223.
[4] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 743.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The problem set before us by the Mother is not a problem of a remote philosophical nature, but an intimate riddle of practical yoga, with direct bearing upon the question of life and its transmutation. We have no need of complex dialectic reasoning with no relation to life or the issue of the moment — the change of our nature to become the fit instrument of the eternal Spirit. The question demands an exact self-scrutiny, a vigilant self-awareness, not only in the calmness of concentration but in the flux of action where all nature is swept by energy and driven by the momentum of work. While driven by the tides of forces, we are apt to lose our concentration and thus become unaware of our discriminating self that is a witness of all that arises. But because such an awareness needs great internal effort and opening, we need not leave the question as insoluble; or, because this has not been done in the past, we must not desist from the effort towards its solution, specially now when we have the unparalleled advantage of the unfailing divine aid.

Truth and falsehood, in this particular case, have a special implication. The Mother does not want us to discriminate between moral truths and ethical falsities. We are asked here to deal with the issue from a spiritual standpoint, in a spiritual light, standing on the plinth of the spiritual consciousness. From here the issue assumes a totally altered character.

Truth is that which aids our psychological development, our spiritual advance and opens the way to our greatest consummation. Truth also exacts its acceptance by us in its way of working, its way of becoming and in the path of inner and external growth and in actions of all types and in the emotions of all natures. All that is true for one individual may not, at the moment, be true for another. Truth has many facets and it is almost impossible to realise it in all its complexity, human and limited that we are. In life and action one of its aspects manifests, becoming thereby the one supremely true aspect of our life. In the course of sadhana we may advance and all that was valid in the past may not apply now or may even be contrary to our progress. Therefore there is no such thing as a single trenchant truth, as it manifests here. If it did, we would have dogmas, codes, canons, and strict regulations where the core of truth is dead by its limitation and external impositions. The truth in its widest connotation surpasses all these exclusive modes of life and mind and action, of human principles. Further, truth evolves in the world; rather it manifests more and more according to the world's capacity of growth and receptivity.

Falsehood on the other hand is that which opposes the truth of evolution, of life, of the soul and of the greater manifestation of the Spirit. It too

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

has its degrees of working. In action it produces the wrong turn, the defective canker, the altering twist that changes, suppresses the true working, the true manifestation and becoming.

Lastly we ask: what is this impulse of action? It rises from the vital-dynamic centre of our being, from the side of creativity, whose ultimate function is to manifest the secret divine energy as an act of Ananda. It is rooted in the seat of our life-centre and if we must discriminate between the false and the true, we must enter into our deepmost life-being. The process, first of all, is an awareness of this centre of dynamism and a call on it to open to the Truth, to give it the right orientaion, the right impulsion, the right drive. If we merely make a mental resolve, without allowing the Truth of the Spirit descending into us to work on all the planes of our being, then all discriminations would be dictated by false impulsions, false ideas, false preconceived concepts that have no bearing on Truth. This may be a motivated action, urged by blind forces of nature, or of ego, cravings, or ambitions. But, as we have remarked earlier, there can be no uniform working of the power of Truth. Itself unconditioned, it works according to nature, status, possibility of the individual, according to his need, his capacity and aspiration and sincerity. It manifests according to our development, our growth and the extent of awakening of our soul. It can manifest in many ways. But the signs of its workings are unmistakable. It always produces the right result, the true aspiration, the true endeavour and gives us the needed force on our path. If we chose wrongly, there is a disharmony in our being, a break in the rhythm of plenitude. A depression may be the result; a veiling of the soul, and a shutting away of the guiding light may be its consequence. Therefore it is always wise not to jump to any action. We must halt momentarily and consult the soul within us to give us the right direction. Or else we may open ourselves to the higher inspiration and ask it to guide us. If we are open to it, the answer will come, almost spontaneously, revealing to us the path to be followed, the course to be taken. This guidance will give us and our actions greater effectivity, greater sureness, and greater power. To state in philosophical terms, there must be a reference of the dynamic aspects of our nature to our deeper soul of poise to receive the needed inspiration and discrimination. This means a spontaneous contact between the inner and the phenomenal aspects of our nature, a constant living on the heights of our being. In other words, to be utterly sincere. For without sincerity no true or valid discrimination can come. Last of all, there must be a complete reliance on the Divine Will in order to become the dedicated instruments of the Divine Spirit. This would mean also the true effective action. At first there may be a groping. But with practice and greater inner opening, the voice of the soul or of higher inspiration would be heard like all other natural elements till, at the end, these would become one with our deeper or higher

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

being, and all our actions would be its actions and there would be needed no effort at discrimination between Truth and falsehood.

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

This is one of the many problems facing specially those who have a sincere will and aspiration to follow the path of yoga, to live truly and consciously, and not as 'unconscious beings', a mere plaything in the hands of divergent forces. As for those who are well satisfied with the ordinary life as it is, and do not feel any need or urge at all to look beyond and rise higher or go deeper in consciousness, such problems do not generally exist.

Let us see, first of all, what exactly is meant by the expression "impulses of action". Broadly, it can be taken to mean the motive force behind, which impels us to some action; it is the urge or impetus which we feel at the basis of any action; in short, it is the desire or will to act.

"Action in the world is given us first as a means for our self-development and self-fulfilment," [1] says Sri Aurobindo. The Gita tells us —

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥

"One has to understand about action as well as to understand about wrong action and about inaction one has to understand; thick and tangled is the way of works." [2]

Each action is dominated or governed by a particular impulse; and each impulse is motivated from behind by a particular force or a combination of forces, divine and undivine. The quality or nature of an impulse depends on the forces which drive it from behind. The impulses may be lower, crude and ego-centric, as well as higher, refined and noble, or a combination thereof. The higher impulses uplift us, whereas the lower ones debase us.

We perceive a higher impulse when we are somewhat high up the ladder of consciousness and are open to its higher planes, and when our psychic being is awake and in front. Similarly, when our state of consciousness is low and quite ordinary, we are open to the impulses of the lower forces which motivate our actions.

At times, without thinking or willing beforehand, we act spontaneously,

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 253.
[2] *Gita*, Chap. IV, Verse 17. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 74.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

as if urged by some inspiration or intuition, or propelled by some instinct or impulse. As Sri Aurobindo observes, "man constantly does work of various kinds by a spontaneous impulse, intuition, instinct or acts in obedience to a natural necessity and law of forces without either mental planning or the urge of a conscious vital volition or emotional desire."[1]

And sometimes it so happens that we do not have to make any conscious effort for discriminating whether a particular impulse is right or wrong. We become aware of a wrong movement, *i.e.*, when the impulse is actuated by the forces of ignorance, just by a subtle indication, some slight inner uneasiness, some faint suggestion and so on. Similarly, when a particular act is right, *i.e.*, the impulse behind it is generated by the right force, then we feel inwardly supported, a subtle sense of plenitude, an inner calm and joy.

Generally, however, in all our impulses of actions, truth and falsehood are generally blended together, so that it is difficult to discriminate between the two.

Now, in order to discriminate between truth and falsehood in our impulses for any action, we must grow conscious of the nature of the impulse, its origin, *i.e.*, the source from which it is derived, as well as the state of consciousness in which we find ourselves at the moment of a particular action.

And, the basic necessities for this, as it is in all other matters in the field of yoga, are tranquillity and equanimity. Our mind must be stilled to such an extent as to resemble a calm and transparent sheet of water which perfectly reflects an image in its totality without any distortion whatsoever. A clear and quiet mind is essential.

Then, for a correct and unbiased discernment of the impulses, we must rise above all mental preferences and prejudices, we must free our mind of all preconceived notions and ideas, and try to get ourselves detached from the problem in question and stand aside, as it were, because we can never arrive at a correct judgment if we get ourselves entangled or involved in the problem itself.

The Gita lays down very clear and revealing injunctions as to the right way of doing actions, the true attitude, which implies the true impulse, that we should have for doing any action —

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पुरुषः ॥

"Thou hast a right to action, but only to action, never to its fruits; let not

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 254.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the fruits of thy works be thy motive, neither let there be in thee any attachment to inactivity." [1]

"Therefore without attachment perform ever the work that is to be done; for by doing work without attachment man attains to the highest." [2]

Now, it is not possible for the mind to judge unerringly and arrive at a perfect discrimination between truth and falsehood, however much it may try with all the logic and reasoning faculties at its disposal. Because mind is not the instrument of knowledge, though it is our instrument *par excellence.*

So, we shall have to rise above and go beyond the mental consciousness and station ourselves on a somewhat higher platform of spiritual consciousness which will offer us a global view of the problem at hand. Away and detached from the limitations of the mind, in the calm wideness of the spiritual consciousness, it will be possible for us to impartially observe our impulses for an action and come to the right discernment of truth and falsehood contained in them. It is not the action itself which very much matters, but the driving forces which from behind influence us and impel us to act in a particular manner.

So, the other way is to go behind the impulse to discover the source where it originates, the forces — good and bad — which goad us to a particular action. In the silence of the depth, beyond our egoistic and superficial consciousness, in a calm concentration, we can sincerely scrutinise the situation in order to arrive at the correct discrimination between truth and falsehood in our impulsions of action.

Now, each one of us has his or her own law or truth of being of which we should try to be conscious by concentration and reflection; and it is essential to be in a state of constant awareness of the truth of our being. If our impulses of action are in accordance with or derived from this inherent truth of our being, then they are certainly the right impulses kindled by the forces of Truth. In the same way, we should try to detect whether there is some concealed desire or ambition, a demand, a vanity behind the impulses of an action, in which case we may be sure that it is motivated by the forces of obscurity and falsehood.

In short, all that helps to elevate our consciousness and widen our outlook, all that helps to bring us closer to the Divine — to its light and height, peace and presence, harmony and beauty — is moved by the impulses of Truth; in the same way, all that lowers our consciousness and arrests our

[1] *Gita*, Ch. II, Verse 47. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 36.

[2] *Gita*, Ch. III, Verse 19. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 53.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

inner progress and draws us away from the Divine towards ignorance and obscurity springs directly from falsehood.

The best and the surest way, of course, is to come in contact with the psychic being deep within. "It is the very nature of the soul or the psychic being to turn towards the Divine Truth as the sunflower to the sun,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo. He comments further, "Unerring in the essence of its will, it is obliged often under the pressure of its instruments to submit to mistakes of action....Yet is there a divination within it which makes it a surer guide than the reason or than even the highest desire, and through apparent errors and stumblings its voice can still lead better than the precise intellect and the considering mental judgment." [2] We should aspire in a silent concentration on the problem to be solved, and take a plunge into the fathomless profundities and dive deeper still, and open ourselves in a sincere self-giving to this secret Divine Presence, our inner Light and Guide which can automatically and spontaneously lead us to the Truth and pin-point as to where the falsehood lies. To quote Sri Aurobindo, " it points the way to the Truth, automatically distinguishes the right step from the false, extricates the divine or Godward movement from the clinging mixture of the undivine." [3] Extremely difficult though the process may be, it is all the same worth our toil and trouble.

The purpose of this discrimination between truth and falsehood is, of course, to avoid and eliminate the wrong impulses either by rejecting or by converting them, and to be consciously moved and guided by the impulses of Truth alone. For this, it is necessary to attain a certain mastery over ourselves, a hold over the outer circumstances and the unseen forces and factors which, to a great extent, influence and determine our actions. The Gita enjoins —

योगस्थः गुरु कर्माणि ।।

"Fixed in Yoga do thy actions." [4]

We should try to be conscious of the Divine's Will in us and silently open ourselves, in a sincere collaboration, to this secret Will so that the Divine's Light and Power may work unhindered in and through us. As Sri Aurobindo observes, "Not desire, not attachment must drive him, but a Will that stirs in a divine peace, a Knowledge that moves from the transcendent Light, a glad Impulse that is a force from the supreme Ananda." [5]

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), pp. 144-45.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 175.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 176.
[4] *Gita*, Ch. II, Verse 48. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, pp. 37-8.
[5] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), pp. 254-55.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY RUKIYA DALAL

Each of us has, some time or other, to face this problem. As life comprises actions, this question is of the utmost importance in our life, specially here in the Ashram.

We often ask ourselves : "Shall I do this? Is it right to do it?" Many times we are put in difficult situations where we cannot decide whether a certain action, big or small, should be done or not, whether it is a good action or a bad one, right or wrong. Of course, at times it is very easy to decide that, because from our childhood we have been told by our parents and teachers and the elders not to do quite a number of things, the disobedience of which would result in punishment, either now and in this world or later and in the next. These forbidden fruits and the addition, later on, of social and moral laws, religious injunctions, sense of duty, books, etc., create within us a sort of psycho-mental being, which is generally known as "conscience". This conscience, as it is said, pricks us when we do a bad or wrong action and thus helps to keep us on a more or less right path. But conscience speaks mostly on broad and general lines and has little to say on most of our little daily impulses and actions. In this case the reason helps.

"Thinking twice," as it is said, can often help us to decide between the "shoulds" and "should-nots". But quite often we are carried away by our impulses, our emotions and feelings, pushed by our desires: we become so eager to do a thing and get so excited about it that we find all the justifications for doing it. Reason then becomes a tool to justify what we want to do, mind becomes the instrument of the vital. Reason is therefore insufficient to decide between the right and the wrong.

The best solution, I think, is to try to remain calm and quiet, to stop thinking about it and to try to go deep within and hear the "little voice of the psychic", as the Mother has called it. When we do or contemplate doing something which is not right, we feel deep within the heart an uneasiness. This is the little voice of the psychic. If we do not take heed of it, after a while it stops saying anything. So we have to try to hear more and more the voice of the psychic till the psychic itself comes to the front and takes up the burden of life and dictates all our actions even to the smallest details.

But this is not a small task and takes a long time to accomplish. In some cases an easier method is to ask oneself: "If I do this, will it in any way serve the Divine? Since all my actions should be an offering to the Divine, will the Divine accept such an action as an offering?" Or one may ask oneself: "Will this action help or hinder me in my progress? Will it take me *towards* or *away* from my goal?" Then answer sincerely and act accordingly.

But in all cases, in every little impulse of speech and action of our daily

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

life, the most effective and the easiest way is, I believe, to feel or, if that does not come easily at first, to imagine concretely the Mother's Presence and, as Sri Aurobindo has said, "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present." "Will *she* approve of the action?" — the answer will show us whether the action is right or wrong.

SPEECH BY SELVI SIVA

The general tendency is to act without reflection. However compelling the impetus may be, if only we could stand back and see, it would save a lot of mishaps. The Mother says: "You must always step back into yourself .... Even if you are in a hurry to do something, step back for a while and you will discover to your surprise how much sooner and with what greater success your work can be done."[1]

If we look down and follow the road, however crooked or bent it may go, it will always appear straight to our eyes. Instead, if we look ahead, we would see it very clearly and the prevision would help us prevent more danger. The Mother repeats: "Never decide anything without stepping back, never speak a word without stepping back, never throw yourself into action without stepping back."[2]

First of all an absolute peace within is necessary. The Mother asks us to keep always our peace, resisting all temptation to lose it. With a turbulent and troubled mind, nothing can be seen, nothing can be decided. The Mother states again: "A very very quiet head is indispensable for a clear understanding and vision and a right action."[3] It is a clear vision that can view the impulse and discriminate the Truth from the falsehood. With that, we must be able to distinguish the eternal Will, the divine impulse, from the caprice of ego, and need and passion and desire, or preferences.

By remaining quiet, we can get into contact with the highest consciousness within our reach. There we can wait for an answer to our call to the Divine Force. Only in the calmness of our being can we hear the silent voice within. Then, we shall be moved by God only, by the highest Truth only. As the Mother says: "Let the vast peace of the Divine penetrate you entirely and initiate all your movements."[4]

[1] *Words of the Mother*, Third Series (1951), p. 58.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 58-9.
[3] *Words of the Mother*, Fourth Series (1952), p. 17.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

CC-0: Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"If you want the consciousness for true actions very much and aspire for it, it may come in one of several ways:

"1. You may get the habit or faculty of watching your movements in such a way that you see the impulse to action coming and can see too its nature.

"2. A consciousness may come which feels uneasy whenever a wrong thought or impulse to action or feeling is there.

"3. Something within you may warn and stop you when you are going to do the wrong action."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 693.)

*
**

"[To be constantly governed by the Divine:] A constant aspiration for that is the first thing—next a sort of stillness within and a drawing back from the outward action into the stillness and a sort of listening expectancy, not for a sound but for the spiritual feeling or direction of the consciousness that comes through the psychic."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 693-94.)

*
**

"As for the feeling from within, it depends on being able to go inside. Sometimes it comes of itself with the deepening of the consciousness by bhakti or otherwise, sometimes it comes by practice — a sort of referring the matter and listening for the answer — listening is, of course, a metaphor but it is difficult to express it otherwise — it doesn't mean that the answer comes necessarily in the shape of words, spoken or unspoken, though it does sometimes or for some; it can take any shape. The main difficulty for many is to be sure of the right answer. For that it is necessary to be able to contact the consciousness of the Guru inwardly — that comes best by bhakti. Otherwise, the attempt to get the feeling from within by practice may become a delicate and ticklish job. Obstacles: (1) normal habit of relying on outward means for everything; (2) ego, substituting its suggestions for the right answer; (3) mental activity; (4) intruder nuisances. I think you need not be

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

eager for this, but rely on the growth of the inner consciousness. The above is only by way of general explanation."

(*Ibid.*, p. 694.)

The Mother's remarks on the above quotations:

"This is simply marvellous and answers most perfectly the question. Nothing more is needed."

11. 1. 1965

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FOURTH SEMINAR

25 April 1965

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"How to make one's studies a means of one's sadhana?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO MAKE ONE'S STUDIES A MEANS OF ONE'S SADHANA?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The central teaching of Sri Aurobindo, stated in his own memorable words, is: "All life is only a lavish and manifold opportunity given us to discover, realise, express the Divine."[1] The same idea has been expressed by him in still more memorable but compact words: "All Life is Yoga." This makes it obvious that all activities of life can be turned into a means of doing yoga or sadhana. Studies too, being a part of life's activities, can therefore be made a means of doing sadhana provided one wants to make them so.

I say "provided" because this is not the only motive of studies or education. There are obviously other lesser motives which find a readier acceptance especially in the modern age. There is, for example, the utilitarian motive which at its lowest level takes the form of commercialism. For the vast majority of the students in the modern world this spirit of commercialism is the ruling motive of their education. Education for them is a means of acquiring qualifications which will enable them to earn more and more money, to get high positions and to be successful in life.

There are a few others, a very small minority, who take up education not for any pecuniary gain or worldly success but for the development and perfection of mental faculties, for having a well-equipped mind, for exploring some field of knowledge which especially interests them, for the widening of the mental horizons, etc. This is the attitude of true culture and in the scale of human evolution it is on a much higher level than the gross utilitarian-commercial attitude which is now so rampant all over the world.

And yet this cultural aim of education is not the highest for it stops short of the ultimate goal of life's activities. To study in order to acquire mental knowledge or to develop mental faculties cannot be an end in itself because mind itself is not an end but only a means, an instrument, of something higher than itself. That higher thing beyond the human mind is the Spirit. So the highest aim of education, as of all life's activities, can only be to realise the Spirit. This makes it evident that if studies are to be directed towards their highest purpose they must be pursued with a spiritual motive, that is to say, made a means of sadhana.

It is of the utmost importance to stress this highest spiritual aim of education at the present moment when, along with other higher pursuits of life, education too has suffered the worst degradation owing to the obsession of the modern mind by the utilitarian-commercial spirit. It has been so much de-

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 138.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

based and vulgarised, made so cheap and paltry that instead of being a high priest of life, as it should truly be, it has been turned into a street pedlar.

To raise education from this low position to its high eminent status it is not enough to revive the lost educational values of the past, however great they might have been, or to reform those of the present. What is urgently needed is a radical transmutation of all educational values, past and present, in the light of the highest spiritual Truth that is now trying to emerge in human evolution to create a New Age in the life of humanity. This is the pressing demand of the Time-Spirit at the present turning-point of the world's history.

It is in order to meet this pressing demand that the Mother has formed this Centre of Education. She stated this very clearly in her inaugural message to the Founding Convention of the Centre of Education in 1951. She said in this message that the Centre was being formed "as one of the best means of preparing the future humanity to receive the supramental light that will transform the élite of today into a new race manifesting upon earth the new light and force and life."

Surely, this is not an endeavour within the capacity of the average mass of students who are either satisfied with the values prevailing in the modern civilisation or, even if not satisfied, do not seek for a radical spiritual transformation of them. It is only a few exceptional souls, who have a clear perception of the present evolutionary demand and an ardent aspiration and a courageous will, who can undertake the effort needed to fulfil it. Our Centre of Education is meant to form a nucleus of such exceptional souls and the education imparted to them here is meant to prepare them for the great task laid upon them at the present critical juncture of human destiny.

To fulfil this task adequately it is necessary for them to remember constantly that if, on the one hand, they are offered a supreme privilege here, they have also, on the other hand, a special responsibility laid upon them which they will not be able to discharge unless they become totally sincere and utilise their studies as an opportunity or a means for doing sadhana.

Studies can be made a means of sadhana only if they are pursued in a spirit of total self-consecration and offering to the Divine, not for the sake of one's own self-development but for preparing oneself to be a perfect instrument for the manifestation of the supramental Truth and the Divine Life upon earth. That is the general principle but in its dynamic application it can find different expressions with different students.

In this Seminar, some members of our Association will explain what according to them is the best way of following this principle of sadhana in studies.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

The subjects of these Seminars are always of living interest to me. This time again the subject is of special value to all of us who work in the School, both students and teachers. As I jotted down my thoughts on it I told myself, "That is the first gift of studies — they have taught me, and given me ample scope, to think for myself, to withdraw and see what I personally felt about a thing and thus helped me to become more and more myself." There lies, for me, the first relation between studies and sadhana.

By sadhana we understand knowing our true self, trying to come in contact with the soul and thereby establishing a relation with the Mother's Presence in us. To know ourselves also means to recognise the different parts of our being and to control their movements according to our ideal — in other words, to prepare the outer being so that it may be able to realise in everyday-life the inner experience in all its purity. For this, it is a great help to offer all our works and action to the Divine Mother aspiring to become one day her true instrument.

Studies can play a very important role in this preparation of the outer being because they serve to train the mind which has to become controlled, rich and plastic if it is to interpret without distortion the subtle indication of the soul. In the light of whatever it understands of the Ideal it must organise our life, always remembering that this understanding will progressively deepen and that every time it must reorganise according to its new perception. In order that the mind may do well this organising job, it has itself to have the requisite qualities — first of all concentration, then richness and variety leading to the wider understanding of any question, refinement and depth. Very important is the capacity to look at one's thoughts and organise them around the Ideal. Gradually we learn to silence the mind knowing humbly that it is only an instrument which must receive from above the knowledge it seeks.

These qualities of the mind we can develop through all the subjects we study and, what is still more interesting, we may get a glimpse of intuitive understanding or even a touch of inspiration if we are open to these possibilities. There is ample scope to get rid of our mental inertia and lack of discrimination in new ways of thought. One interesting defect to be noticed and dealt with is the varying intensity in the mind's alertness at different moments of the day.

But apart from developing qualities of the mind which studies are meant for, they also help us to know the other parts of our being: first by our reactions to what we read and then by our reactions to our human environment, either as students or as teachers. This leads to a better understanding of our tendencies and offers at every moment the possibility to overcome our petty

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

selves and bad habits, encouraging us to work not for personal accomplishments, not even for mere interest but simply as a means to progress. Thus, gradually, as the understanding deepens, we may even learn to distinguish the different planes of consciousness which are at the origin of the things we study.

To crown it all, if we can call for the Mother's Presence and offer our studies and all our efforts in this line to her, then we may be sure that she will make of our studies a real preparation for and not a hindrance to her work. We shall never shirk studies as of little importance and yet know, feel and yearn to have that true Knowledge which is beyond studies and which can come to us only through sincere aspiration.

SPEECH BY BAREN GHOSE

If, as Sri Aurobindo says, "All Life is Yoga", then each and every uplifting effort can have its proper place in one's integral sadhana for the Divine Life. And studies, being a happy source of light to our benighted minds, can be carefully turned into a help and support for our progress upward, if only we choose to utilise them as such.

How one can profit best by one's studies depends upon the attitude with which one approaches them. If preparation for the Divine Life be one's sole object, then all studies must take an appropriate re-orientation. The mere satisfaction of one's personal ends, like ambition, vanity or display of intellectual eminence must be replaced by an ever-increasing urge to know the unknown more and more and to become a perfect medium for its expression.

Sri Aurobindo's directions in this respect are clear:

"To read what will help the yoga or what will be useful for the work or what will develop the capacities for the divine purpose. Not to read worthless stuff or for mere entertainment or for a dilettante intellectual curiosity which is of the nature of a mental dram-drinking. When one is established in the highest consciousness, one can read nothing or everything; it makes no difference ..." [1]

The five kinds of capacities which can be developed through one's mental education have been clearly set forth by the Mother :

"(1) Development of the power of concentration, the capacity of attention.

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1279.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"(2) Development of the capacities of expansion, wideness, complexity and richness.

"(3) Organisation of ideas around a central idea or a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea that will serve as a guide in life.

"(4) Thought control, rejection of undesirable thoughts so that one may in the end, think only what one wants and when one wants.

"(5) Development of mental silence, perfect calm and a more and more total receptivity of inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being." [1]

To acquire and assimilate these essentials, no studies are more directly and more effectively helpful than those of the writings of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. In our sadhana, until we are able fully to place ourselves under the benign influence and guidance of our psychic, we are expected always to be at the height of our consciousness. As the Presence and look and touch of the Mother and the Master, so their power-charged words are a constant leverage for our consciousness.

While many branches of Humanities, and Science in particular, have hardly any element in them to lower our consciousness, excepting the risk of becoming dogmatic about any particular mode of thought or getting stuck-up at any of its high achievements, in literature, specially of a mediocre sort, there is plenty of such lowering stuff. Yet there is a great scope in literature for learning the language, picking up nice turns of expression, diction, style, etc. Here youthful minds must be on their guard against going down the scale of their consciousness. In pointing out the poisonous effect of undesirable books on the subconscient mind, the Mother has said :

"Each time you read a book in which the consciousness is very low, it strengthens your subconscience and inconscience, it prevents your consciousness from rising upward. It is as if you poured buckets of dirty water on the efforts you have made to purify your subconscient." [2]

The question is : how to make this right selection in our present ignorant state of mind? For a man of sincere heart and will no problem can remain insoluble for long; his very resoluteness to tread the path of Truth would one day certainly tear off the veil of ignorance and, lo! the Master of the being will be there to guide his steps.

But is this only a promise and not a day-to-day reality with us? From his personal experience every one knows that no sincere call for help in sadhana has ever gone unanswered.

[1] *On Education* (1952), p. 38.

[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1965, p. 19.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

If we always remain faithful to the demands of the Master of our being and never forget our aim then our studies also can be a great incentive. Otherwise, the mental knowledge by itself will be of relative importance and at best of indirect help.

Let the Master's words echo and re-echo in our hearts and minds:

"It is necessary... that the advancing Knowledge should base herself on a clear, pure and disciplined intellect... And it is certainly the fact that the wider we extend and the surer we make our knowledge of the physical world, the wider and surer becomes our foundation for the higher knowledge, even for the highest, even for the Brahmavidya."[1]

So, I conclude with a prayer to the Master and the Mother, adapting the words of the Master himself:

May our studies give us a clear, pure and disciplined intellect,
a wide and sure foundation for the highest divine knowledge.

SPEECH BY BRAJKISHORE SINGH

Studies are that complex set of activities of reading, writing and thinking that develop the faculties of the mind. There is in the concept an idea of a quiet, steady, rational pursuit of knowledge.

By sadhana is meant a process of self-discipline and self-development that leads to the realisation of any aim, and more particularly to the realisation of self or of God. Associated with this process are cultivation, practice, constant endeavour, and even severity. And in the particular connotation of yoga-process, we have in addition the idea of sacrifice and offering. In this aim of the discovery of a truer self, the first requisite is the recognition of the falsity of the ego. Only then can follow a gradual decentralisation, until the ego dissolves in a truer self. The realisation cannot come until the ego is sacrificed. And one of the most direct means is the offering of all action as a service to the Divine.

Thus we see that studies and sadhana do not exclude each other. In fact, in ordinary life, studies would seem closest to sadhana, since they are free from the sense of immediate utility and give more steadiness and stillness than the rest of the activities of life. Also, by their stress on mind, they offer the possibility of seeing oneself detachedly.

Yet, often, studies with their attention on self-development resulting in

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 11.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

social superiority have seemed contradictory to sadhana, which has its primary stress on self-giving and service. Also because the knowledge they bring is only pragmatic, not giving the satisfaction of the grasp of any absolute reality.

But in a sadhana where the whole self has to be made worthy of being offered, no instrument can be left fallow. Mind has its function in the organisation of the works (that are indispensable to the realisation of Divine Life) and in the conscious perception of order and harmony in the universe.

Thus in the process of self-perfection, studies of some kind as a means of mental development deem indispensable, even if our outer work does not demand a direct use of what we learn.

But studies can be considered a means of conscious sadhana only if they are done with the aim of developing the instrument for serving and expressing the Divine.

Why do we then fail to make it a part of sadhana?

Many of us have been seen falling into a routine-consciousness in which the unrelenting cycles of weeks weigh upon us and kill the sense of wonder in studies.

Another error is the dragging on with studies in spite of having lost all interest in them, because they give us a sense of aristocracy or an illusion of security and because the effort to attend most of the classes is not too exacting.

There are others who have taken up too many things and cannot concentrate on any.

All these causes take away from the intensity which alone can make of studies a means of searching. An activity that is lifeless or blind or mechanical cannot be sent up as a sacrifice.

So that studies may become a means of sadhana, we must utilise all the opportunity they offer of disciplining ourselves. We must utilise them for developing the faculties of the mind, instead of fulfilling merely the outer conditions of an institution. The responsibility is more with ourselves than with the institutions, which are no more than opportunities.

Our studies might not remain a burden that they are, if we could dedicate the work before we start and after we have done it. And while we are at it, let us look for perfection, in the parts and of the whole. For that is sadhana. Then perhaps our studies, instead of being repetitive, can become creative, living, beautiful, worthy of the altar.

SPEECH BY PRAKASH PATEL

The first words in that most remarkable and soul-provoking of booklets, Sri Aurobindo's *Thoughts and Glimpses*, are:

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"When we have passed beyond knowings, then we shall have Knowledge. Reason was the helper; Reason is the bar."[1]

This aphorism tells us that it is only when we have ceased to be occupied with knowings and surpassed them that we shall arrive at Divine Knowledge. Studies, therefore, cannot intrinsically be of value in one's sadhana; they have to be consciously made a means for that purpose.

If we engage in studies sincerely, yet without being totally engrossed in them, we can derive considerable benefit from them from the point of the sadhana. For, as the Mother has said,

"Concentrating on studies is one of the most powerful means of controlling the mind and the vital; that is why it is so important to study."

So the Mother has assured us that if we study diligently, her blessings will always be with us.

It is essential to have the right spirit in one's studies, as in everything else; it would be futile to study in the spirit that the majority of students have and to expect the studies to help in the sadhana. Sri Aurobindo wrote thus concerning this point:

"I see no objection to his going on with his studies, — whether they will be of any use to him for a life of sadhana will depend on the spirit in which he does them. The really important thing is to develop a stage of consciousness in which one can live in the Divine and act from it on the physical world. A mental training and discipline, knowledge of men and things, culture, capacities of a useful kind are a preparation that the sadhak would be all the better for having — even though they are not the one thing indispensable."[2]

Thus while in themselves studies can have little spiritual value, if done in the true spirit they can be made a valuable aid to one's sadhana.

Further, we can also profit from studies rightly pursued because they develop our intellect as well as our capacity for correct and sensitive expression, both of which can assist the sadhana. For if we have worthwhile ideas, our powers of expression can be very useful, something on the lines of the maxim. "The pen is mightier than the sword." The Mother says:

"Certain ideas have the power to transform the world. It is these ideas that ought to be expressed; they are the guiding stars in the firmament of the

[1] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 377.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1276.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

spirit, it is they that lead the earth towards her supreme realisation."[1]

And this, surely is the aim of our collective sadhana.

As for the intellect, it can be equally a hindrance or a help. Sri Aurobindo says, however, "Even when fully trained and developed, the intellect cannot arrive at absolute certitude or complete truth, but it can arrive at one aspect or side of it and make a reasonable or probable affirmation; but untrained, it is a quite insufficient instrument, at once hasty and peremptory and unsafe and unreliable."[2] One can well understand the value, nay, the importance of studies conducted in the right spirit and the right manner.

One must not study for the satisfaction of one's ego or its ambitions or desires. Always and ever, one must offer one's studies to the Divine, just as one must offer everything else to the Divine. And one must do the best one can in one's studies so that they be a fit offering to him. For in truth, it would be vain to make artificial distinctions between studies and sadhana. The Mother says:

"In the Integral Yoga, there is no distinction between sadhana and the outward life; it is in each and every moment of the daily life that the Truth must be found and practised."[3]

These words of the Mother leave no doubt as to the attitude we should adopt towards our studies to make them a means, a part of our sadhana.

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

To study, in its essential meaning, implies the raising of our mental capacities, enlarging our intellectual horizon, and giving coherence to our thinking. Study, used in its most derogative form, is for economic and social gain or mental pride. Even the aim of the philosopher or the scientist, to attain knowledge for the sake of knowledge, is not the highest because there is possible a higher type of study. By a higher type of study I do not mean a more advanced form of external study, but study which transcends its formal limits, and becomes the vehicle of a greater self-becoming and development. Study usually is either boredom, or the spring-board of ambition, or

[1] "The Four Austerities and the Four Liberations", in *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 91.

[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1245.

[3] *White Roses* (1973), p. 34.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

perhaps the filling up of some unfilled vacant hours. But it can become also in its own terms a way of our sadhana.

Before I proceed, let me explain the meaning of the term 'sadhana'. It was considered that there were only certain well-defined paths by which one could pursue one's sadhana. But now the age-old tradition does not apply in our times, when, by the descent of the supramental Light, each mode, each way, each sincere effort can become a way of sadhana. Sadhana also means discipline, method, a way of working for the realisation of Self and God. Sadhana is the accelerated process of conscious evolution culminating in divine realisation. This being so, our study can very well become a means of progress, knowledge, of the discovery of our central inner being. The next inevitable question that rises is: how can this be done?

Study, essentially is a process of learning some branch of knowledge. This is a process of concentration, memory and a successful expression of the subject studied. The whole is a mental process. It is possible, as a first step, to remember that this mental growth and acquisition is not for the benefit of the narrow mental self, but is essentially a process of self-dedication through the medium of study. By practice this remembrance shall become part of the student's consciousness and study shall become indeed a sacrifice. Then, he must learn to see that study, though it opens intellectual horizons, has a deeper purpose: to transcend mental limits and to open to the heights of intuition.

Study thus changes from an objective course of knowledge to a larger subjective way of perception and knowledge by experience. The student would discover that the actual topic of study would have for him a wider grasp, a deeper seizing and he would need a lesser mental effort to understand a fact, a sequence, a pattern, for, by now, he would have acquired the intuitive perception by which he would automatically enter into the core of the matter without any mental effort and the knowledge acquired be a permanent portion of his memory.

Also there is greater joy in studying as a work of dedication. There is no great happiness in working for one's own benefit, or for some ambition which only brings unrest or momentary elation or frustration. But studying not for one's gain brings greater peace, joy and fulfilment.

But this study as a means of sadhana is not for all. It is for those who are called to the path. It is specially for us here who are studying in this Centre of Education. For, it is not our aim to turn out great scholars, philosophers, scientists or masters of branches of study for their own sake, but students who have made study a way of self-dedication. The world is producing great scholars by thousands every year — surely we do not want to fall in the same blind groove. A dedicated student who has made study a means of reaching his soul and higher realities is surely to be preferred here. For, we must re-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

member that our institution is a spiritual one; here we cannot allow a lesser goal to spoil our essential aim. That the way may appear very arduous is no cause that we must leave the effort. Ours is not an easy path. Study, as a sacrifice, is the true study. Here all the activities including studies are opportunities to open to and communicate with the Divine.

In fact all things that are done here have their goal, the goal of sacrifice. Sacrifice is our existence. So study too falls into the same spiritual pattern. All things have their meaning and fulfilment in sacrifice; sacrifice is the backbone of all we are and shall be. Before I conclude let me explain about the term sacrifice. It is not a physical process but an integral psychological process by which we lift up all our actions, thoughts, ideas, moods and becomings to the highest godhead in us or above us. It is a concrete process, and if we do it selflessly, seeking no reward, we can attain the greatest possible spiritual realisation. As Sri Aurobindo says : "He is God, the Divine, the Purushottama. To Him we offer everything as a sacrifice; into His hands we give up our actions; in His existence we live and move; unified with Him in our nature and with all existence in Him, we become one soul and one power of being with Him and with all beings; with His supreme reality we identify and unite our self-being. By works done for sacrifice, eliminating desire, we arrive at knowledge and at the soul's possession of itself; by works done in self-knowledge and God-knowledge we are liberated into the unity, peace and joy of the divine existence."[1]

SPEECH BY OSCAR LÄSSER

This time I will not speak in an objective and philosophic manner but approach the subject in the rather dim light of my own experiences and feelings.

I propose to take as the starting-point of my talk a question we have surely asked ourselves one time or another : Why do we study or what are our motives in studying? When I analysed myself in the light of the motives which led me to study, I made an interesting rediscovery of some parts of my personality which I knew very little or which I had ignored completely. I felt as though I were listening for the first time to my own voice on a tape recorder and recognising it only with difficulty.

So let us review the development of this student who resembles many others. First we see a lazy schoolboy, who considers school as an inevitable nuisance and who works just enough not to annoy his teachers and parents too much. Fortunately, he finds at school some amusing chums who help sweeten the bitter pill a little.

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), pp. 115-16.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

However, some years of combined effort of teachers, parents and the world suffice to make this schoolboy understand that life is a grave and severe business, a battlefield where one has to fight to become rich and to gain a good social position. The grown-up and so necessarily "wise" people convince him that a reasonable student must arm himself with a lot of good marks, diplomas and degrees. But one day he has had enough of it and starts to earn his bread as a clerk.

Nevertheless, a thirst for knowledge rises in him although the usual form of studies no longer satisfies him. He realises that studies are undoubtedly useful for professional and social success, but for him studies have as primary function the widening of his horizons and the development of his personality. This desire for knowledge makes him travel in Europe and Asia in search of a better education, not only of his intellect but of his body and of his soul too. Finally, he discovers in a very curious and mysterious fashion the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

There he realises slowly the joy of a disinterested mental culture summed up in the words "Knowledge for knowledge's sake". He becomes aware of the fact that true knowledge cannot be acquired by the reasoning intellect, which in its very nature is analytical and can never grasp the whole truth. Our student begins thus the quest for true and integral knowledge through the yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

When contemplating the Mother's subject for the Seminar I realised how little sadhana I had done while studying and that daily meditation and concentration alone were very insufficient. Our sadhana should be integral and include the works of life, of love and, last but not least, of knowledge of which studies are a means.

Scared by such a formidable task we could recoil and ask : Why should we do sadhana at all, can't we leave that to those exceptional few, called yogis, who have a spiritual destiny? To such a question the Mother replied: "All human beings have a spiritual destiny that is more or less near according to the resolution of each one. One must *want* it in full sincerity." ("Tous les êtres humains ont un destin spirituel plus ou moins proche suivant la résolution de chacun. Il faut *vouloir* en toute sincérité."[1])

Then how exactly can we make our academic studies a means of our sadhana? I must disappoint all those who think that one can solve this question by a magic formula or a rigid method. I do believe that this is an essentially personal question which each one has to solve for himself. However, there are some general, useful signposts on the way, some of which I will try to indicate through my proper experiences.

First we must focus on an aim. "An aimless life is always a miserable life," says the Mother. ("Une vie sans but est une vie sans joie." [2]) Our aim

[1] From a personal letter. [2] La Mère, *Éducation*, p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

should be as broad, integral, noble and high as possible and we must make it the pole-star of our existence. The following passage of the Mother gives us a glimpse of how such a goal could look: "To learn in order to know, to study in order to have the knowledge of the secrets of Nature and of life, to educate oneself in order to increase one's consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to be master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, one's incapacity and ignorance, to prepare oneself in order to progress in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true....We want to have here only those who aspire for a higher and better life, who are eager for knowledge, and perfection, who look ardently towards a more wholly true future."[1] ("Apprendre pour savoir, étudier pour connaître les secrets de la nature et de la vie, s'éduquer pour faire croître sa conscience, se discipliner pour devenir maître de soi, pour surmonter ses faiblesses, ses incapacités et ses ignorances, se préparer à avancer dans la vie vers un but plus noble, plus vaste, plus généreux et plus vrai....Nous voulons ici seulement ceux qui aspirent à une vie plus haute et meilleure, ceux qui ont soif de connaissance et de perfection, ceux qui regardent ardemment vers un avenir plus totalement vrai.")

If we want to progress in our sadhana, sincerity is of primary importance. This means that we have to act constantly in conformity with our highest ideal or, in more yogic language, according to our highest level of consciousness. This is more easily said than done. How often are our highest aims and ideals corrupted by the egoistic parts of our personality which seek the satisfaction of their own petty ambitions! By self-introspection I see that I am still a mixture of many conflicting interests and that in daily life I am far from sincerity. Looking at my companions I see with some relief that they are in a similar or worse position. When I asked the Mother about the merit of my studies which included such so-called worldly and "perilous" subjects as international relations, political science and economics, besides history, languages, literature, philosophy of science and psychology, she replied : "This programme is good and you can follow it. The important point is to be more and more sincere, always more sincere so as never to go astray in the integrality of one's aspiration. This sincerity brings certainly the aid of the Divine Grace." ("Ce programme est bon et tu peux le suivre. Le point important est d'être de plus en plus sincère, toujours plus sincère afin de ne jamais se tromper soi-même dans l'intégralité de son aspiration. Cette sincérité amène l'aide certaine de la Grâce divine." [2])

As a student of international relations I wondered in what way I should approach this subject. Has not the Mother said many times that she does "not believe in the usefulness of words, spoken or written, when the world's pro-

[1] *Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education Handbook* (1963), pp. 7-8.
[2] From a personal letter.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

blems are concerned" and that "an inner effort to acquire oneself the consciousness of Unity and the consequent transformation of one's action is infinitely more effective than speeches and articles"? On the question of how to study international relations the Mother gave the following message : "These classes are a part of studies and for them as for the rest, everything depends on the spirit in which they are done." ("Ces classes font partie des études et pour cela, comme pour le reste, tout dépend de l'esprit dans lequel elles sont faites." [1])

I think most of us have realised that indiscriminate reading can do great harm to our character, personality and, last but not least, to our sadhana. Our subconscious is a very faithful recorder of everything we read, and ugly, debasing or erotic impressions received from literature into the subconscious can be very obstinate adverse entities when we start the purifying process. Thus we do well to select our reading very carefully. However, sometimes we have to face and read about the hard realities of life which can be all but uplifting and purifying. In such a case let us not identify and plunge headlong into the first best trash but let us always keep a part of our being detached and in contact with our highest aspiration. If this is done sincerely we have an excellent guide in this detached part, telling us what to read, protecting and warning us. It is quite evident that the above applies to the study of literature as well. Let us keep in mind the Mother's warning: "I do not approve of those literature classes where under the pretext of knowledge one wallows in the mud of a level of consciousness which is not proper here [at the Centre of Education] and cannot in any way help to build up the knowledge of tomorrow. If one could discover here and there the expression of a sincere and luminous aspiration one could make it the occasion of an interesting study and development." ("Je n'approuve pas de ces classes de littérature où sous prétexte de connaissance on patauge dans la boue d'un état d'esprit qui n'est pas de mise ici, et ne peut, en aucune manière, aider à construire la connaissance de demain....Si on pouvait découvrir de-ci de-là, l'expression d'une aspiration sincère et lumineuse, on pourrait en faire l'occasion d'une étude et d'un développement intéressants."[2]) I asked myself whether the Mother's verdict was against literature in general or against only a certain light fiction appealing to our lower mental and vital emotions. I came to the conclusion that I can make literature a means of sadhana by studying primarily such writings as are the expression of a sincere and luminous aspiration, and by looking for the *rasa* e.g., the true delight one finds in the intellectual luminosity, the beauty of style and the expression and depth of literary masterpieces. The study of literature gives us also an interesting glimpse of the evolution of human consciousness. The Mother wrote to me about reading and literature: "This is a purely personal question. Each one should

[1] [2] From personal letters.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

choose his books according to his need and aspiration. With some practice one becomes quickly aware of a book's influence, and if it is a degrading influence one must stop reading that book." ("C'est une affaire purement personnelle. Chacun doit choisir ses livres suivant son besoin et son aspiration. Au bout d'un certain temps on s'aperçoit vite de l'influence du livre que l'on lit et si c'est une influence dégradante, il faut arrêter la lecture du livre."[1])

A strong will power as the foundation of an ardent aspiration for the high and luminous is another *sine qua non* of this sadhana. As long as our soul or psychic being is not the supreme governor of our being a rigorous self-imposed discipline is indispensable if we want to progress spiritually at all. If we revolt against the "shackles" of our daily discipline under the pretext of becoming again so-called "free man", a fall into our lower nature seems nearly inevitable as long as the psychic being is not our master. "Without discipline nothing of value can be achieved in life." ("Sans discipline on ne peut rien faire de bon dans la vie."[2])

A constant opening, as integral as possible, to the Mother, to Sri Aurobindo, to the divine Force, or Light, or whatever one might call it, is another important point in this sadhana. Concentration and meditation are an excellent preparation. We have to be aware that mental silence is absolutely necessary if we want to receive the divine guidance, illumination, force, etc., to any significant extent. During our studies we can concentrate on the depths of our being in order to consult our inner helper and guide. I found it also very helpful to try to stop thinking so as to open myself to the surrounding layers of mind-consciousness which, according to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, contain the universal thought as well as all solutions to our mental problems — ready-made as it were. What an adventure to plunge into the world where all possible thoughts of past, present and future are at our disposal! "It is out of a silent mind that I write whatever comes ready-shaped from above,"[3] says Sri Aurobindo. To think outside of our body implies that it is not our brain which thinks but that the thoughts come from "outside". The true process, according to Sri Aurobindo, is to arrive at the point where effort is no more needed, to efface oneself as completely as possible so as to let the current pass. "There are two ways of arriving at the Grand Trunk Road. One is to climb and struggle and effortise (like the pilgrim who traverses India prostrating and measuring the way with his body: that is the way of effort). One day you suddenly find yourself on the G.T.R. when you least expect it. The other is to quiet the mind to such a point that a greater Mind of mind can speak through it."[4]

[1] [2] From personal letters.
[3] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 224.
[4] Nirodbaran, *Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo*, Second Series, p. 154.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

It is to the advantage of the student-sadhak to offer his studies to the Divine, and to liberate himself from all physical, vital or mental preferences and prejudices. Only if we no longer hanker after the fruit and offer the result of our actions to the Divine, will we gain that indispensable equality of the soul, where failure and success will not trouble us any more.

This sadhana will not always be easy or pleasant. It seems to me that a step upwards into the light is sometimes followed by a step downwards into the darkness which has to be transformed and purified.

However, trusting in the Divine's and the soul's aid, we can face all trials. "Be on your guard, hold fast to the psychic, do not let it recede into the background, allow nothing in your consciousness to slip in between it and yourself, close your ear and your hearing to all other suggestions, put your trust in that alone", the Mother advises newcomers. ("Soyez sur vos gardes, cramponnez-vous au psychique, ne laissez rien dans votre concience s'infiltrer entre lui et vous, bouchez vos oreilles et votre entendement à toutes les autres suggestions et ne vous fiez qu'à lui seul."[1]) It is now up to us to follow the Mother's advice so that our way towards the New World may be straight and luminous.

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

Study constitutes an important, perhaps the most important factor in man's life. Vast and varied in its magnitude, life itself offers an enormous scope and opportunity for our study and progress. Our study helps to build our future career in life by gradually training and enriching our mind from our very childhood. All-comprehensive in its importance, it encompasses the whole of life and existence. In fact, study is essential in our terrestrial existence.

Now, we have to understand what our sadhana is, and in what way and to what extent we may be benefited in our sadhana through studies.

Our sadhana or yoga is to outgrow our present narrow and limited consciousness and attain to the divine consciousness with all its sublime profundities, magnificent vastnesses, and supernal heights, and unveil the secret godhead in all its splendour resulting in the total transformation of our being and nature, our life and existence on earth.

There are, of course, various ways and means which can be employed to successfully trudge along this path of yoga. For example, we can take recourse to meditation and concentration, disinterested work for the Divine, fine arts in the shape of music, painting, sculpture, etc., the way of love and devotion to the Divine, physical culture, as well as studies or the intellectual

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, Nov. 1952, p. 68.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

way, and so on. Each one is to follow the way most suitable to his or her need and aptitude. With some a particular line may be suitable while with others a combination of all or some of the lines may be helpful for the sadhana.

In fact, every occasion or event in life can be made a means for our inner growth and development. The only thing that matters is the attitude or spirit in which we receive them, the value or importance we attach to them.

Here we shall confine ourselves to the deliberation as to how our studies can be made a useful means for our progress in the sadhana. "Study is of importance only if you study in the right way and with the right turn for knowledge and mental discipline,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo.

Just as physical exercise helps to bring about a harmonious development, agility and plasticity in the different parts of our body, just as fine arts and culture help to take us to the hidden depths of our being by aesthetic means and by the heart's emotions, so also our studies help us to explore the higher mental ranges of our being by developing our intellectual faculties.

There are various subjects for study as well as various ways of dealing with the same subject. One factor which we must bear in mind is that the stuff and substance of any book or writing has a very great influence over our mind. Of course, a sadhak may be expected to read any book with equal detachment of spirit, without being involved or affected in the least by such study. But it depends perhaps on our inner preparedness, sincerity and strength of will.

In fact, our study of books can, to a considerable degree, make or mar our sadhana. So it is necessary, at the very outset, to be careful as to what kind of books and subjects will be beneficial for and what will be detrimental to our sadhana. Sri Aurobindo advises us : "To read what will help the yoga or what will be useful for the work or what will develop the capacities for the divine purpose. Not to read worthless stuff or for mere entertainment or for a dilettante intellectual curiosity which is of the nature of a mental dram-drinking."[2] Studies can be a help or a hindrance to our inner development. Studies conducted for their own sake, i.e., only with the idea of mental development have no spiritual value for our sadhana. As Sri Aurobindo says, "if the mind is too intellectually developed on certain rationalistic lines, it may hinder."[3] Study of ordinary books and novels can wash away whatever gain may otherwise be achieved by long and laborious effort. As the Mother affirms, "Each time you read a book in which the consciousness is very low, it strengthens your subconscience and inconscience, it prevents your consciousness from rising upward. It is as if you poured buckets of dirty water on the efforts you have made to purify your subconscient."[4] Similarly

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1277.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1279. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 1270.
[4] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Feb. 1965, p. 19.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the study of higher and deeper subjects, of books on yoga has a salutary effect on our mind which helps to uplift our consciousness.

Study taken as mental gymnastics helps us to attain a very great clarity and precision and plasticity of mind. Studies, pursued intelligently, can certainly help to organise and enrich our mind, sharpen our intellect and enhance our thinking capacities. So, they have their value and necessity in life. But their real worth for our sadhana lies not so much in their ability to enlighten our surface being and consciousness as in their capacity to influence and illumine our inner self and nature. Our study of a certain subject helps us to concentrate and sink deep within, and that exercises a very effective control over our mind which normally is an aimless wanderer. As the Mother says, "the mental being like the psychic is hardly within you....There are very few people who have organised their mind sufficiently to keep it within them, compact, preventing it from gallivanting." [1]

Study is more a helper than an actual performer. Real knowledge cannot be imparted to anybody, nor can it be acquired by reading a number of books, or writing a few essays. "Ramakrishna was an uneducated, non-intellectual man, yet his expression of knowledge was so perfect that the biggest intellects bowed down before it," [2] observes Sri Aurobindo. In the language of the Upanishads,

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।

"The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning." [3]

True knowledge is a thing innate in the self and reveals itself by gradual self-unfoldment. Study can at best help to unveil the concealed knowledge by deepening our consciousness. To quote the Mother, "What strikes you in a book is what you have already experienced deep within you....The knowledge that seems to come to you from outside is only an occasion for bringing out the knowledge that is within you." [4]

Our studies have their value for our sadhana only insofar as they are carried on for the sake of the Divine, to bring out the divine possibilities latent in us, that is to say, if they can awaken in us a feeling or an urge to know more and more of our true selves in a bid to exceed ourselves; if they can help us to express some deeper truth of our being and consciousness, or be able to convey to us the deeper meaning and purpose of creation and

[1] *Ibid.*, Nov. 1964, p. 41. [2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1286.
[3] *Katha Upanishad*, I. 2, 23. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 249.
[4] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 79.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

manifestation, the significance of terrestrial evolution and so on. Our studies — reading of books or writing or dwelling upon them — must be marked with a definite inner progress. Then they are certainly valuable and beneficial for our sadhana. Sri Aurobindo says, "If the intellect is surrendered, open, quiet, receptive, there is no reason why it should not be a means of reception of the Light or an aid to the experience of spiritual states and to the fullness of an inner change." [1]

As for us here, study of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's books can be made a very cogent means, a powerful leverage for our inner progress. We must try to go very deep into their writings in a meditative mood and in a spirit of calm concentration and inner openness, and with a deep feeling of the soul's joy in such studies. It then becomes truly effective for our sadhana marked by an abiding peace and progress with a feeling of the depth in our inner self and consciousness. And we can derive from it as much benefit as or even more than we get through routine meditation. In fact, just like work, study also, if pursued in the true spirit, is meditation.

By studying the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's writings we come in direct contact and communion, as it were, with them; and we imbibe, consciously or unconsciously, the Divine Light and Force, Love and Bliss which can unerringly guide us to the ultimate aim and goal of our sadhana. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "In reading these books you get into touch with the Force behind them and it is this that pushes you into meditation and a corresponding experience." [2]

Let us conclude with these words of the Upanishads —

तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु !

"May our study be full of light and power!" [3]

SPEECH BY SWADESH CHATTERJI

The question that the Mother raises before us today indeed demands a deep speculation. It is a question that we should have asked ourselves much earlier, for, in fact, all our acts should be a means of our sadhana. As studies occupy such a prominent place in our life it is of great importance that we seek to make them a means of our sadhana rather than a mere fulfilment of our mental curiosity.

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1243. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 1273.

[3] *Taittiriya Upanishad*, X. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 343.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The first thing to do is to take a completely new attitude towards our studies. We must tear open the shackles which make of studies a mental fancy, an occasion to expose our brilliancy and make a show of our intelligence. If at all we are to make them a means of sadhana, we must look for something deeper and more purposive in them. Therefore it is our primal task to discover what the spiritual contributions of our studies are. It is clear that we cannot hope to attain to our goal by cramming the brain with knowledge of facts but by realising that the essence of studies is of a higher order than an intellectual glamour.

Let us then give the due value to the disciplines that our studies demand, the power of concentration and the aesthetic sense that they cultivate in us. The mental wideness that we thence imbibe can greatly help us to overcome our petty difficulties and establish an equal attitude towards all circumstances. It matters not whether we reap success or not; what matters is the joy we derive in the effort to perfect our mind. It is the quest for perfection that should be our aim and not an attempt to shine out and gain name and fame. But here let us not deceive ourselves by making this disinterestedness an excuse for laxity or slackness. To be sincere to ourself is a prerequisite for any progress whatsoever. In studies is a unique possibility to develop this most valuable quality and we must not miss this chance.

Let us regard our studies as the best opportunity to lay the foundations of our sadhana. For discipline, concentration, equality and sincerity — are these not the very qualities a sadhak must possess if he is to reach his goal? Now is our best moment; let us pray that we may effectively make our studies a means of our sadhana and thus assign it its just place in our life. But yet let us not for once forget that studies in themselves cannot give us what we seek here. We must see through the veil of literature, science and philosophy and perceive that the true knowledge transcends all our mental gropings. Studies are only a preparation to perfect the mental instrument, to receive and express the higher knowledge. What we can most do now is to let our studies mould us into perfect divine instruments so that when the hour comes we can serve as channels for the Knowledge to descend and flow through us....It is only when we thirst to fulfil this mission that we can aspire

> "... to grow up into straightforward, frank, upright and honourable human beings ready to develop into divine nature." [1]

[1] Sri Aurobindo

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"The intellect can be as great an obstacle as the vital when it chooses to prefer its own constructions to the Truth."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, p. 1244.)

*
**

"What you have said is perfectly right. To see the Truth does not depend on a big intellect or a small intellect. It depends on being in contact with the Truth and the mind silent and quiet to receive it. The biggest intellects can make errors of the worst kind and confuse Truth and Falsehood, if they have not the contact with the Truth or the direct experience."

(*Ibid.*)

*
**

"Its [the intellect's] function is to reason from the perceptions of the mind and senses, to form conclusions and to put things in logical relation with each other. A well-trained intellect is a good preparation of the mind for greater knowledge but it cannot itself give the yogic knowledge or know the Divine — it can only have ideas about the Divine, but having ideas is not knowledge. In the course of the sadhana intellect has to be transformed into the higher mind which is itself a passage towards the true knowledge."

(*Ibid.*, p. 1245.)

*
**

"For one who wants to practise sadhana, sadhana must come first — reading and mental development can only be subordinate things."

(*Ibid.* p. 1270.)

*
**

"I see no objection to his going on with his studies, — whether they will be of any use to him for a life of sadhana will depend on the spirit in which he does them. The really important thing is to develop a stage of consciousness in which one can live in the Divine and act from it on the physical world. A mental training and discipline, knowledge of men and things, culture, capacities of a useful kind are a preparation that the sadhak would be all the better for having — even though they are not the one thing indispensable.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Education in India gives little of these things, but if one knows how to study without caring much for the form or for mere academic success, the life of the student can be used for the purpose."

(*Ibid.*, p. 1276.)

*
**

"Reading and study are only useful to acquire information and widen one's field of data. But that comes to nothing if one does not know how to discern and discriminate, judge, see what is within and behind things."

(*Ibid.*, p. 1277.)

*
**

"Intelligence does not depend on the amount one has read, it is a quality of the mind. Study only gives it material for its work as life also does. There are people who do not know how to read and write who are more intelligent than many highly educated people and understand life and things better. On the other hand, a good intelligence can improve itself by reading because it gets more material to work on and grows by exercise and by having a wider range to move in. But book-knowledge by itself is not the real thing, it has to be used as a help to the intelligence but it is often a help to stupidity or ignorance — ignorance because knowledge of facts is a poor thing if one cannot see their true significance."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 1278-79.)

The Mother's remarks on the above quotations:

"These quotations are excellent. Surely you must read them at the end of the seminar ...."

22.4.1965

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIFTH SEMINAR

8 August 1965

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER :

"How to turn one's difficulties into opportunities for progress?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO TURN ONE'S DIFFICULTIES INTO OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESS?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The subject which the Mother has chosen for this Seminar appears at first sight to be like a paradox, for it is quite contrary to our common conception about difficulties. Usually, difficulties, whether in ordinary life or in yoga, are considered to be obstructions in our way which prevent our progress and bring about downfall and defeat. How can they be a means for our progress? How can a hindrance be a help or an obstacle an aid? But what appears paradoxical to a superficial view is not necessarily so to a deeper inner vision. And in yoga one of the most fundamental requirements is to acquire this inner clairvoyant perception of things and events. When we have that inner perception we find that a large number of our commonly accepted notions undergo a profound change, often amounting to a complete reversal. Things and events appear not only different from our ordinary view of them but often reveal an altogether opposite character. The subject of this Seminar is a most significant example of this change.

This will become quite clear if we probe into the fundamental cause of difficulties. Why do difficulties, obstacles, sufferings, calamities, ordeals arise on our path? Why do they constantly recur, sometimes even increase and refuse to yield in spite of our endeavour to overcome them?

Usually we put the blame for our difficulties and troubles on other persons or on external circumstances or, in any case, upon factors for which we are personally not responsible. But in the deeper truth of things, if we are frank and honest to admit it, the real cause of our difficulties is not outside but within ourselves. In fact, we ourselves are responsible for our difficulties; it is always some defect or weakness or obscurity within us that creates the difficulties and often even draws upon ourselves the external circumstances that bring misfortunes, disasters and catastrophes. No difficulty can come upon us if there is not something somewhere in us which invites or opens to it. As Sri Aurobindo says : "No misfortune can come, the adverse forces cannot touch or be victorious unless there is some defect in oneself, some impurity, weakness, or at the very least, ignorance. One should then seek out this weakness in oneself and correct it." [1] He also says : "When one does sadhana it is constantly seen that so long as there is an important defect somewhere, circumstances so happen that the occasion comes for the defect to rise until it is thrown out of the being. If one can take the coming of these circumstances

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1639.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

clairvoyantly as a call and an opportunity for conquering the defect, then one can progress very quickly." [1]

For this reason "difficulty cannot be overcome by your running away from it" [2] for "the difficulty is truly inside, not outside. Outside circumstances only give it the occasion to manifest itself and so long as the inner difficulty is not conquered, the circumstances will always crop up one way or another." [3]

This is the deeper truth about difficulties; they are pointed reminders of the weak points in our nature and occasions for overcoming them and progressing forward on the path.

The extent and intensity of difficulties are not only a measure of the progress we have to make but also a sign of the progress actually made. Contrary to our common conception, the nearer we arrive to our goal, the difficulties too become more numerous and intense; and just at the last point before the final victory they become most formidable and overwhelming. The night is darkest before the dawn.

This is true not only of the individual's sadhana but of the collective sadhana as well. The forces that oppose the advent of the Truth upon earth become more and more furious in their opposition as that advent draws nearer, and at the last crucial moment they raise up the worst possible difficulties. That is why the Mother has been saying recently that after the manifestation of the supramental Truth in February 1956 the adverse vital forces have descended upon earth with an extreme intensity to obstruct and destroy that Truth. To put it in her own words : "It would seem that all the adverse anti-divine forces, the forces of the vital world have descended upon earth, using it as their field of action and at the same time a spiritual force, highest and most powerful, has also descended upon earth for the first time to bring a new life here. That makes the struggle all the more acute, violent, visible, but also, it would seem, definitive and that is why one can hope to arrive at an immediate solution."[4] Sri Aurobindo also has said: "At the present time Falsehood and Darkness have gathered their forces and are extremely powerful; but even if we reject the assertion of the mystics and prophets since early times that such a condition of things must precede the Manifestation and is even a sign of its approach, yet it does not necessarily indicate the decisive victory — even temporary — of the Falsehood. It merely means that the struggle between the forces is at its acme. The result may very well be the stronger emergence of the best that can be; for the world-movement often works in that way. I leave it at that and say nothing more." [5]

These are most reassuring words of Sri Aurobindo and we should always

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1698. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, p. 1697.
[4] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958.
[5] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1629.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

bear them in mind at the present moment when there is an unparalleled uprush of dark anarchic forces in the world atmosphere. Even the legendary Kali Yuga seems to pale into insignificance before the chaotic world-condition at present. It is as if the dark inconscient ocean at the base of life is being powerfully churned up. And the worst may still be waiting to come.

But instead of getting disheartened in the face of these perilous circumstances we should perceive their true significance in the light of Sri Aurobindo's vision, and realise that however distressing they may be, they are in reality the sure sign of the imminent victory of the Truth that is arriving to establish its permanent reign upon earth. They are the birth-pangs of the New Age. In the womb of the great Mother the Golden Child is fully grown and it will soon be born. The birth-pangs are inevitable but they are only passing inconveniences. So instead of being distressed by the present darkness we should rather look beyond to the fast approaching Truth and, rejoicing, salute its advent.

Difficulties are a part of the game we have to play, but in spite of all the hurdles they raise up on our way, we are sure to win. We have only to remember and repeat the mantra Sri Aurobindo has given us: "Difficulties omec and difficulties go, but, she being with you, the victory is sure."[1]

I have mentioned only a few points concerning the subject of the Seminar by way of an introduction. There are many more issues relating to it into which I cannot enter. It is for the other speakers to explain them and give us a clear understanding of them.

SPEECH BY SHOBHA MITRA

The subject chosen by the Mother for this Seminar reminds me of these most exquisite lines of Sri Aurobindo on the present human stage of consciousness: "Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped."[2] Maybe, this is the cause of all our difficulties. We are still so hard, so crude that without difficulties, without blows, we fall back into inertia and refuse to progress. Therefore God, using human difficulties as means, leads us towards a luminous future.

But what is the origin of these difficulties? Why do they arise? The difficulties arise from the clash of egos, from the limitations of our nature. So long as there is ego, personal will, so long as there are desires, impulses,

[1] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 325.
[2] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 393.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

passions, attractions, preferences or repulsions, difficulties are bound to be there. We form at every instant a fixed set of ideas about things, about persons, which are nothing but *our* own mental constructions, *our* experiences, *our* studies. They may be absolutely incorrect. We live in mental constructions with an innate, spontaneous, almost unshakable conviction of the absolute value of *our* mode of thought, *our* observations and we are so used to our own imperfections that these mental constructions act in our being automatically, without any conscious reflection on our part, by a sort of habit. The same thing occurs with others also. Each individual, however imperfect he may be, gives an absolute value to his own way of looking at things. This rigid mental construction, this crude way of sticking to our own imperfect vision, this obstinate way of justifying our impure nature is, I think, the origin of our difficulties.

But how to turn our difficulties into opportunities for progress?

Before we try to turn our difficulties into opportunities, we must be sure of two fundamental things. Firstly, do we really want to progress? Have we got that unquenching thirst to surmount all difficulties and march forward, forever forward, towards undreamed-of masteries and future revelations? Secondly, are we ready to "shun all lowness, narrowness and shallowness" of our nature and change our consciousness to be "wider than the widest horizons" and "loftier than the highest Kanchanjungha?"[1] Well, that should be our aim. When difficulties arise we should try to withdraw ourselves from the outward consciousness and find in peace the necessary indication for change. As ego is the centre of all difficulties, we should try to be more and more egoless, free. A wider vision of things, a spontaneous plasticity towards change must be acquired with vigilance and sincerity.

We must, by constant effort and practice, try to secure a quiet and sustained power, which will be greater than our difficulties; a power capable of calling down the higher Force which will transform our limited, egoistic movements, enlarge them to such an extent that difficulties will serve us as means to overcome defective parts of our being. Difficulties are, as the Mother says, "like walls that try to obstruct our way". But we must also know that to face a difficulty means to face the possibility of realising something new in the consciousness. If by a still more accentuated, sustained, obstinate effort and concentration, we can pass through this obscure, stubborn wall of difficulty to the other side, there will come to us a new consciousness, a new force, a new power, a new procedure that will take us further on and on till at last we arrive at a state of consciousness where there will be no circumstance, no force, no action, no movement that is not the expression of a deeper, higher, more abiding reality. It will be a state where, in the Mother's words, "all was gold and gold and gold, a torrent of golden light pouring down in an

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 90.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

uninterrupted flow and bringing with it the consciousness that the path of the gods is a sunlit path in which difficulties lose all reality." [1]

SPEECH BY RUKIYA DALAL

Difficulties are universal; none can escape them. Even Avatars are not exempted from them. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have had theirs too.

But the nature of difficulty varies. A student might have difficulties in studies, an ordinary man struggling to earn his livelihood has problems in that sphere. Again, a man trying to lead a spiritual life has difficulties of another nature — conflicts within him, inability to conquer his weaknesses or to change his nature, and so on.

Now, what are generally the reactions of people when difficulties come in their way? Some start grumbling and cursing their fate, some become pessimistic and find life hollow and meaningless, and some others take them philosophically with a pinch of salt. But there are a few who face them with a smile, and this is the first right attitude, for the Mother has often said to us, "A smile acts upon difficulties as the sun upon the clouds — it disperses them." [2]

And is it not the best thing to face all troubles with a smile and to turn them into opportunities for progress? For mere grumbling and cursing one's fate will not lessen or lighten them.

We can often console ourselves by thinking of great men who have had to undergo innumerable difficulties and strivings. The moment we think of Sri Aurobindo and his hardships and struggles, all our difficulties seem as small as pebbles compared to the mountains of difficulties which he had to surmount. This gives us hope and often helps us in taking the right attitude. When difficulties besiege us, we can say to ourselves, "These difficulties have befallen me to give me a stimulus; they have come to push me forward towards my goal. Perhaps I was lingering behind, perhaps I was in a slumber, and they have come to awaken me and to hasten my progress."

If one can take this attitude towards difficulties, it becomes easier to accept them as chances for progress. All circumstances, both favourable and adverse, — for life always consists of ups and downs — should be taken as helpful means towards our progress. And, specially, difficulties fall upon those who take up our path of yoga because here we have undertaken to transform our nature, which is indeed the most difficult of all tasks and in which one meets with all sorts of obstructions. Some people, coming from outside

[1] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 210.
[2] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and faced with difficulties here, get shocked and they exclaim that they never expected to have so much trouble and so many obstructions and hindrances. But it is precisely this that we should expect here. For here the difficulties have a special significance. Every obstacle, every blow that comes may point to some defect, incapacity or weakness in us; sometimes they come, or rather are sent by the Divine to change us, to make us move on the right path. And often, through them, the Divine tests our faith and confidence and endurance; and we have got to go through this ordeal. As the Mother says :

"All depends on what you want. — If you want Yoga, take *all* that happens as the expression of the Divine Grace, leading you towards your goal, and try to understand the lesson that circumstances give." [1]

And this is one solution to our problem. When difficulties come, why not take them as an expression of the Divine Grace which leads us towards our goal, and try to understand the lessons which they bring? This attitude alone can help us to turn them into stepping-stones to progress.

In one of her answers the Mother has said :

"Whenever one wants to achieve something in life, difficulties come. Take them as discipline (*tapasyā*) to make you strong and you will more easily overcome them." [2]

One thing we must always remember when faced with difficulties — for it will give us faith and courage to overcome them. It is this : the difficulties come to us only in the measure of our capacity to bear, and our strength to overcome them. Nobody can have difficulties out of proportion to his capacity to bear. And the greater the difficulties, the greater the capacity somewhere within us to surmount them. And if one takes them in the right spirit of considering them to be the expression of the Divine Grace and the quick means towards progress, this very attitude, if it is sincere, holds in itself the power to turn them into opportunities for progress. One has only to feel, "Well, these difficulties are given to me by the Divine and I must accept them willingly and make the change required, for they have not come just by accident but have some purpose behind them."

So, when they come we should not worry but try to remain calm and quiet and pray to the Mother for her help and guidance and to throw light upon them. We should try to stick to the right attitude that they have come as a boon from the Divine. With this courageous attitude and full faith in the Divine, even catastrophes can be turned into smiling victories.

[1] *Mother India*, May 1964, p. 5.
[2] *White Roses* (1973), p. 41.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

This can be said to be a major problem in the path of yoga requiring solution. "This yoga", says Sri Aurobindo, "is a spiritual battle; its very attempt raises all sorts of adverse forces and one must be ready to face difficulties, sufferings, reverses of all sorts in a calm unflinching spirit." [1]

The whole life, as it is at the present day, can be said to be a honeycomb of difficulties on all fronts. Sorrow and suffering, disease and distress, and a hundred other setbacks and inconveniences rule over life; chaos and confusion are the order of the day. And this is the same with regard to the individual as it is with the society, or the nation, or the world at large. We are all steeped neck-deep in difficulties and discords from the mental down to the most material.

In order to turn our difficulties into opportunities, we must know why the difficulties arise at all, what purpose they serve in our life. Well, this will take us as far back as the story of evolution and involution. Our life, as it is, springs out of the great inconscience, our nether origin. We are born, in fact, in the very midst of ignorance which is the cause of all our suffering and misery, our manifold tragedies that constitute the copious difficulties or hurdles in our life. So we can easily envisage that the cause of our difficulties lies very deep-rooted. Sri Aurobindo writes, "The spiritual change which yoga demands from human nature and individual character is, therefore, full of difficulties, one may almost say that it is the most difficult of all human aspirations and efforts." [2] And their purpose is to weigh and measure our real worth in the terrestrial existence; they put to test our sincerity and faith, our inner strength and courage, our equanimity and tranquillity, and all the hidden potentialities yet to manifest. So, plainly speaking, difficulties are not only inevitable but also indispensable since without their hammer blows again and again, we cannot be sincere or conscious enough to adequately respond to the call of the spirit, the deepest need of our true self. The Mother says, "Each one has the difficulties that suit him for his total realisation." [3]

In the ordinary life, men blindly grope in the darkness; they are crushed, as it were, under the heavy pressure of difficulties, being unable to find any way out. In the life of yoga, a conscious effort is made to steer clear of the recurring difficulties of life, to make them subservient to our need and progress, in a bid to transcend them and finally triumph over them.

The difficulties are usually considered as obstacles in the apparently smooth and unruffled flow of our life. Ordinarily, they seem to constitute the

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1639.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1618-19.
[3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1957, pp. 119-20.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

barriers in our way to progress and development. Well, looking superficially, it is so. But if we learn to look at them from quite a different angle of vision we shall perhaps reconsider our view regarding the existence of difficulties in our life. The Mother tells us, "If you observe yourself closely you will indeed see that you carry in yourself the contrary of the virtue that you have to realise.... You have a special purpose, a special mission, a special realisation which is your own, and you carry in you all the obstacles necessary for making that realisation perfect.... All the difficulties are there exactly in order that you might learn to transform them into the truth that they hide." [1]

Real miseries may visit us unheeded in the garb of the so-called pleasures and successes of life, just as the real opportunities may present themselves in our life in the guise of sufferings and difficulties. In fact, we generally fail to recognise the Divine's Grace and Help, Love and Compassion behind the difficulties of our life; and we are blind at the same time to realise the lure and attraction of the devil behind what we normally consider as the opportunities of our life. We must cautiously move in life. Everything depends on how we regard the difficulties, on our attitude and inner reaction towards the difficulties and reverses of life.

Of course, we should not invite difficulties when they can be avoided; that is certainly not desirable. In the present state of things, however, the difficulties cannot be totally averted, inasmuch as they are the outcome of our own imperfections, and they are the pointers to the innumerable defects and disabilities of our own nature and consciousness. So the total abolition of the difficulties will mean a total or radical transformation of our being and consciousness. It is the difficulties, therefore, that press on us the need to transcend ourselves. And till that is effected, they are inevitable.

Since we thus know that we will have to confront difficulties, it is no use giving ourselves up in complete despair and despondency, no use condemning our fate as the inexorable decree of Providence. That will neither help us in any way nor reduce the difficulties by a whit; that will, on the contrary, add to our misery. And that is the defeatist mentality which is not befitting the children of the Divine Mother. The Gita tells us:

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥

"This yoga is to be resolutely practised without yielding to any discouragement by difficulty or failure."[2]

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1957, pp. 119-20.

[2] *Gita*, Ch. VI, Verse 23. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, pp. 101-102.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

After all, we ourselves weave the pattern of our own destiny, by our own deeds and acts — good as well as bad.

We must, under all circumstances, learn to take the very right attitude. Once we are in front of the difficulties, there should be no turning back, no hesitant step, no defeatist look. It is futile to try to run away from a difficulty since it is a necessary and unavoidable step in the course of our integral progression. We should face the difficulties with courage and fortitude, with patience and endurance, humility and calm resignation. Our right attitude itself will greatly minimise their intensity. So the presence of difficulties demands of us to acquire these qualities which are most needed in the path of yoga. Sri Aurobindo says, "The difficulties that come are ordeals and tests and if one meets them in the right spirit, one comes out stronger and spiritually purer and greater."[1]

And instead of trying to find the cause of a difficulty elsewhere, we should go deep within and look into ourselves. After a calm and dispassionate probing, we are sure to discover its hidden meaning, its veiled significance in our life. This will require us to grow more and more conscious of ourselves as well as of our environment. For this again, we should gradually try to develop our capacities of concentration and deep reflection which can slowly and steadily lead us to the threshold of self-discovery. The difficulties, thus, make us conscious of the higher realities of our life, and provide us with the key to turn inward, to live within, to reorientate our life in the light of the spirit. And viewed in that light the difficulties will lose their sting and, instead of barring our way as hindrances, they will serve as real opportunities for our progress. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "In the unseen providence of things our greatest difficulties are our best opportunities. A supreme difficulty is Nature's indication to us of a supreme conquest to be won and an ultimate problem to be solved."[2]

The difficulties constitute a veritable challenge to our life and existence. In fact, from the very first appearance of man upon earth, and throughout, it is the difficulties that goad man to outgrow himself both materially as well as inwardly; it is again the difficulties that provide occasions for varied discoveries within and without. Our whole life is, after all, an adventure of the spirit for self-finding and self-expressing.

The overcoming of each difficulty imbues and fortifies us with renewed will and vigour for crossing still more difficult hurdles ahead, for fighting yet fiercer battles of life. The difficulties act as the stepping-stones in our gradual 'ascent to the Truth'.

The difficulties of each one are the yardsticks to measure the amount of effort and progress one has yet to make. Each difficulty is thus the forerunner

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1639.
[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 7.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of a decisive victory to be won for the Divine. A great difficulty is the promise of a great victory to be scored in the course of yoga. "The greatest force is born out of the greatest difficulty,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo. So instead of being dejected and dispirited in the face of an intricate situation we must rise to the occasion and prove ourselves equal to the task. We must go on fighting till we conquer. Sri Aurobindo says, "One must take it as a trial of strength, a call for gathering all one's capacities of calm and openness to the Light and Power, so as to make oneself an instrument for the victory of the Divine over the undivine, of the Light over the darkness in the world-tangle."[2] All our victories are, in the long run, the Mother's victories in and through us. And the gain from each conquest will far excel the pain that a difficulty may impose on us. In fact, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, "Pain is the key that opens the gates of strength; it is the high-road that leads to the city of beatitude."[3]

So, if we ponder over the fact deeply, we come to realise that the difficulties and reverses basically play the role of opportunities in furthering the cause of our spiritual progress and upliftment. Behind all the struggles and strifes of our life there is always something much greater and profounder that seeks to emerge from within our depth. Behind all our outer discord and disharmony there rings a deeper note revealing to us distant vistas of peace and quietude, of harmony and beauty, of light and power and supreme felicity that further transport us to the realm of the spirit. The Mother writes, "How close is he to the summits, who awakes in the depths! For the deeper the abyss, the more the heights reveal themselves."[4]

As for us here, it is much easier to transmute our difficulties into opportunities because of the direct Presence and Guidance of the Mother and the Master, their constant Help, Love and Compassion sustaining us in all our difficulties, and guiding us through all the vicissitudes of life. If we are truly sincere and have unshaken faith and trust in them, their Grace can work miracles. And the difficulties which otherwise might prove to be unsurmountable by our personal effort alone, will be made much smoother and easier to overcome by the intervention of the Divine's Grace. "A little of it even will carry you through all difficulties, obstacles and dangers....Its touch can turn difficulties into opportunities, failure into success and weakness into unfaltering strength,"[5] observes Sri Aurobindo. And if we wish to profit fully by the action of the Grace we must try to rise above all our petty desires, perverse egoism and vain self-glory. We should constantly open ourselves, in all humble self-giving and silent gratitude, to the Mother's Force and Light,

[1] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 393.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), pp. 1741-42.
[3] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 141.
[4] *Words of Long Ago* (1946), p. 57.
[5] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 10.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to her Love and Protection, aspiring all the while to feel ever closer and closer to her inwardly. And the difficulties will gradually lose their hold on us and will be found to be our collaborators.

In fact, as we find, all our difficulties taken in the right attitude and viewed in their proper perspective can be converted to corresponding opportunities, with the active help and support of the Divine, to contribute fully towards our spiritual self-fulfilment.

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

Difficulties are invariable occurrences in our path of yoga. But their presence is not a sign of one's incapacity or failing. They do not occur by chance or by the caprice of fate. They arise owing to our attempt to go beyond the confines of world-ignorance; or they may occur owing to some disharmony in our being. Whatever may be the source, no difficulties are unsurmountable, no failing or limitation can bar us from reaching the goal, once we have taken the decision to go forth firmly rooted in our soul, with faith as our guide, with the Divine as our companion.

In fact, if we have the vision we would find that difficulties make the true basis of all progress. They give us the incentive to conquer our lower nature, they spur us to discover our central being, the core of all strength and light. Difficulties are the marks of our ascent from Ignorance to Knowledge, from manhood to godliness. They must be tackled with patience, with unfailing faith; for it is not easy to change our lower nature and consciousness, our habits and impulsions and all those movements which cling to the lower rhythm of things. Difficulties make us aware of our actual state. They bring us to the reality of our present condition, so that our limitations may be dealt with resolutely and thrown out. If we allow the difficulties to rule over us, that would mean that we are shirking our responsibility and that we are clinging to the past and are against all progress. Neither remorse nor self-harassment would solve the problem. We must look squarely at the situation, study each nook and crevice of our being and call down the Divine Force to fight the impeding obstacle. Any attachment to our failings would nullify the effort; any weakness for our limitations would only increase the difficulties.

Whenever difficulties present themselves before us, we have also the invariable aid of the Divine to overcome them. For, no difficulties come which we cannot cope with. They increase in proportion to our progress, our capacity for resistance, our reliance on the Divine. Difficulties do not allow us to stagnate into complacency, into torpor, but, by their stings and blows, make

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

us push ahead. This is the path of the spiritual warrior. In *Savitri* we witness this phenomenon. Savitri refuses to be ruled by Death or cowed down by its puissance. For her its fiat does not exist. Death reveals to her its many attractions, it shows her the futility of the apparent creation, it mocks at her attempt to rescue Satyavan's soul from its invincible grip. It debates long with her to win her soul. But Savitri is unconquerable. The Divinity within her increases in proportion to the menace of the great universal power. Her puissance increases with Death's increase, till at the end she reveals herself as the Supreme World-Mother:

> "In a flaming moment of apocalypse
> The incarnation thrust aside its veil."[1]

Here difficulties become the gateway for self-discovery and self-perfection. What holds good for Savitri may not apply equally to our small instance; but the ideal remains, the example is set before us that difficulties can become the real doors to progress.

If we look at the world-conditions, we find no issue in the tangle of contending powers; there is no solution whatsoever of problems in man's existence, be it in politics or in society or as a matter of fact in any sphere of his activities. We find obstacles everywhere standing like unscalable walls. We have reached the very nadir of obscurity, of falsehood, of error, of suffering. It is now that we must evoke the Divine Grace, the ray of the Supreme to guide us, to change us, to lead us out of the quagmire. The Lord has put before us extremely trying conditions. Also we on our part have invited them by our weaknesses and our turning away from the path of light. But the moment has come when we must call the Flame, the radiance which also grows secretly with the growth of darkness. For we must remember that we are not alone in the struggle; the Divine Mother herself is there with us, fighting with us, overcoming all obstacles for us. Only we have to grow aware of her working, her unfailing aid, her unfatigued love. We must have faith, a total and burning faith in her. But if we shut her out by our ego and only see the external aspect of things, then difficulties would rule over us and then we would miss the great opportunity for progress that these extreme chaotic conditions have opened before us. Otherwise we shall find that difficulties and opportunities are manifestations of the same term. One is the negation of light and the other the affirmation of it. Wherever there are difficulties, there must invariably accompany them the even measures of Divine Grace and the chances of progress. If we had faith in the Divine and have heard the call, difficulties would vanish before us. If we know that we are the children of Immortality, no obstacle can limit our progress or bar our way to

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book. X, Canto 4, p. 664.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

self-knowledge and God-knowledge. By faith, perseverance and by adhering to our soul we can transform difficulties into opportunities for greater realisation.

SPEECH BY MITA CHAKRAVARTI

"All who enter the spiritual path have to face the difficulties and ordeals of the path,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo. The path to our goal, to the complete manifestation of the divine on earth, to the absolute change of ignorance, darkness and falsehood into divine knowledge, light and truth, is exceedingly difficult. This path is strewn with the opposition of various forces, coming either from insufficient faith, egoism and inertia in the consciousness of the sadhak himself or from outer hostile forces which are fundamentally against any progress towards the manifestation of divine life on earth. But these too have their own utilities. For the Master has also said, "If one can take the coming of these circumstances clairvoyantly as a call and an opportunity for conquering the defect, then one can progress very quickly...."[2] "They rise, because if they did not rise the action would not be complete, for all has to be faced and worked out, in order that nothing may be left to rise up hereafter."[3]

Man suffers from several difficulties. Most of them, as I have said, are due to his own imperfect ignorant nature and others are the resistances of outer hostile forces. The former is the first and main stumbling-block before the sadhak. As soon as he starts his sadhana, which is an invocation of the Divine Force to change the ignorance of mind, body and life to create a Divine Life in matter, he acts against his very own nature. His mental ideas, vital desires and attractions, physical habits stand in the way of the growth of the higher consciousness. There is also the resistance of universal nature, which either influences the mind, vital and physical by old ideas and habits or creates opposition, persecution, misfortune of many kinds, pain, illnesses, assaults and adverse conditions. Moreover, these attacks are persistent. They occur repeatedly and the rare victories are chequered with failures.

There are also other complications due to the limited movements of human consciousness. The Divine Force which comes down to change the unwilling resisting parts, to make the sadhak a fit *ādhāra* for the descent, goes to work behind the veil of the surface consciousness. The external being of the sadhak, which was elated at the first touch of the higher Force, loses all its sense of elation when the Force withdraws behind the veil, for it is incapable

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1915.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1698. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 1881.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of following the way of action of the higher consciousness. On account of his ignorance, he cannot understand the cause of this sudden loss, and feels that he has been neglected and left without guidance.

Besides, the Force traces a path too intricate for the mind to follow. It rises uplifting a part of the nature to a higher level and then comes down to a lower layer again to raise another part. Human ignorance becomes a difficulty here too; the mind cannot understand this movement of ascent and descent.

The incapacities of human nature also create a barrier. In spite of all its eagerness for the Divine it fails to bear a constant touch of light, power or Ananda. A continuous presence of the Divine Truth exhausts the mind and the resultant fatigue becomes an obstacle in the path.

All these impediments are, however, temporary, for as the sadhak becomes more and more conscious of his own nature, as he progresses nearer to the goal, he understands the Divine Will and attunes himself to the working of the Divine Light and Power. But till the inner changes are entirely assimilated and absorbed the sadhak must guard himself vigilantly against the pitfalls of depression and doubt. The continuous struggle against his own nature, the long periods of obscurity and the tiresome overwhelming pressure of difficulties set the sadhak to doubt his own capacity and to distrust the divine working. This absence of faith opens the sadhak to the hostile forces too, which do not delay at all in taking advantage of his weakness and exaggerating the difficulties to intensify the depression and dullness.

But if these depressions and doubts can be avoided then the difficulties do not remain difficulties any longer, they become opportunities to hasten progress. In this yoga a complete change of the nature down to the physical is demanded. Due to his unconsciousness and ignorance the sadhak fails to spot his weaknesses, he cannot distinguish between the Divine Will and his own desires. Under the strain of the difficulties the sadhak has the opportunity to know the right from the wrong, acquire a more perfect self-knowledge. These oppositions also force him "to seek a greater strength, a more perfect self-knowledge, an intenser purity and force of aspiration, a faith that nothing can crush, a more powerful descent of the Divine Grace."[1]

The sadhak has also the opportunity to understand the unfathomable love and compassion of the Divine Mother for her children. If he turns a little towards the light and the truth, she gives him tenfold courage, sympathy and support. And even if he refuses or misuses her help she does not leave or forsake him, she waits patiently for his return. So the difficulties not only teach the sadhak to scrutinise himself, they also make him aware of the Divine Compassion, the knowledge that the Divine is the only friend, the truest, the kindest. The Divine is the only one in the world who really cares for him,

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1734.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

understands him and sympthises with him. So the difficulties are in fact opportunities.

If these difficulties are to be turned into opportunities successfully by the sadhak, the first step he should take is to be conscious of his own self. For the sources of the difficulties are within him and not without. He must understand the real cause of the struggles, the undivine elements within him and must reject them strongly and persistently. A sincere strong central will to follow the truth alone even in face of the hardest physical, vital or mental ordeal, is the basic necessity.

A quiet mind is also a basic necessity for the descent of the Mother's Force. No one can succeed in his sadhana by his own merit. It is the Mother's Force alone which can change the oppositions and adverse conditions. But the Mother's Force cannot work effectively except in a quiet mind. Only a single sincere aspiration can bring back or create the necessary quietude.

Once the sadhak attains the quiet mind and recognises the Divine Presence within him, he has to aspire for the peace, the purity and the force. He has to call them again and again till they settle within and start changing and transforming the movements of his lower nature. If the sadhak thus opens and spreads himself to the light and waits faithfully for the descent, he hastens and facilitates the divine working. When the opposition has disappeared the sadhak will find in his consciousness a greater receptivity and capacity to retain them.

It is necessary for the sadhak to observe the wrong movements within himself but it is also necessary that he does not think of these negative aspects too much. The concentration on the lower nature discourages the sadhak and may obscure a less vigilant mind easily. Only those who have a permanent connection with the higher consciousness can go down to spot the imperfections and weaknesses in the lower consciousness. But that too is risky. It is always safer and better for the sadhak to become like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother and to aspire for her help to detect and reject the falsities of his being.

If the sadhak, however, seeks to progress too rapidly by taking sudden and decisive steps instead of pursuing the slow method of elimination, the hostile forces stir into activity and attack in all fury. In order to hamper his progress they try to stop him by all possible ways. They present various suggestions to the mind and vital and try to influence them and turn them away from the path. If the sadhak can steadily reject and give no response to those suggestions the hostiles become really violent and try to shake his inner being by outer assaults.

To the sadhak these adverse conditions present a trial of his strength and sincerity. If he can gather all his capacities for calm and openness for light

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and power to make himself a fit instrument for the victory of the Divine against the undivine, then he is ready to win the battle. It may seem sometimes that all is lost but as the Divine Mother has said, "It is when everything seems lost that all is saved." [1] An obstinate perseverance and an ardent aspiration bring always the help, force and blessings of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

In Chinese the word "crisis" is written with two characters, one representing danger and the other opportunity. Our difficulties are indeed made of these two components. Of course they should not be invited, but when they occur the sadhak must change the one into the other, danger into opportunity.

He must pray to the Divine Mother for help and guidance, he must aspire ardently for the descent of her light and truth, he must obey her unquestioningly.

In doubt and depression the sadhak has to say to himself, " 'I belong to the Divine, I cannot fail'; to all suggestions of impurity and unfitness, to reply, 'I am a child of Immortality chosen by the Divine; I have but to be true to myself and to Him — the victory is sure; even if I fell, I would rise again'; to all impulses to depart and serve some smaller ideal, to reply, 'This is the greatest, this is the Truth that alone can satisfy the soul within me; I will endure through all tests and tribulations to the very end of the divine journey'."[2]

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूविष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम ॥

"O God Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin. To thee completest speech of submission we would dispose." [3]

SPEECH BY BRAJKISHORE SINGH

A difficulty is the psychological or physical resistance we meet with in the circumstances, when we make an effort. This sense of resistance might arise even from the limitations of our own powers when we are trying to realise something in the outer world or to make an inner progress. It might be merely a sense of want that appears in the basic needs of life. In all cases, a difficulty is a first "no" to our striving or desire, or a break in the established harmony in our life.

[1] The Mother's New Year Prayer 1953. [2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1425.
[3] *Isha Upanishad*, Verse 18. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 68.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

But nature never submits to it, except perhaps at its faintest points. In fact it would seem that the challenge of the obstacle is the very principle by which she moves. So from that point of view, we are not turning the difficulty into an opportunity, — it would seem the only condition for progress. Our duty then is to turn our consciousness, in order to perceive the fact rightly and face squarely the situation that presents the difficulty.

Yet this is no absolute law of human consciousness. For it does not always move in a straight line, and often a retreat contributes to a greater progress than a blind, fruitless drive. Thus a difficulty is not necessarily a challenge to intenser effort. It may represent an opportunity to withdraw, to step back, to gather force. It is also an opportunity to question and verify the fundamental validity of the undertaking, and, even more, to revise our attitude, the very quality of pressure we are exerting — whether in spite of all appearance our effort is not a "dusty folly" merely. "Strive rightly," we are told, and a difficulty comes in to remind us of it again and again. The circumstances are as often a guiding finger as a deterrent. And the universe may hold for us a greater prize than we can offer ourselves.

Difficulties can take an infinite variety of forms; and how to face them or utilise them for progress will depend on their nature as well as our own state of consciousness. Mostly when a difficulty appears, it carries with it at once a sign of strength and weakness in us. Strength, because the very fact that it has appeared and we are put in the circumstances to face it shows that we have reached the point where we hold a real capacity of executing the difficult task or outgrowing a limitation in our nature. Weakness, because there are still in our nature weak points which give us the experience of difficulty.

A difficulty might make itself felt through physical pain, suffering, want; a sense of limitation, imprisonment, suffocation under certain given circumstances; rising of desires, passions contradictory to the goal; revolt, depression, peacelessness due to failure to understand certain problems in the mind or situations in life itself. It might as well show itself through an accident, a tragedy, with a demand on the being to bear a physical, mental handicap or separation.

In most cases difficulties are unavoidable and we have no choice but to undergo them. What should we then understand by not utilising the opportunity? It would simply mean that out of fear we try to shut our eyes to the difficulties, deaden the senses and consciousness in order to avoid the suffering or to mitigate it. But we know from experience, at least from physical suffering of pain or cold or heat, that shrinking makes it more acute, with what we can add to it with our imagination. On the other hand, an acquiescence, a conscious "letting go" can release us into a fresh field of experience, which is a further extension of consciousness, and which corresponds more to joy than to pain.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

But I do not mean that we should invite them. For difficulties cannot be a goal in themselves and hunting for them could be a form of perversity. "Do not run away, nor invite" might be a good general rule. For there are plenty of difficulties even for the most heroic, if we are awake.

There are difficulties that merely stand tentatively for our choice. Such would be the invitations to meet those situations that offer possible satisfaction to the egoistic or lower nature. Here, if we are not too sure of remaining within ourselves, it would be wise to gently refuse the invitation. At a later stage we may allow ourselves casual tests by accepting.

When desires arise, facing the difficulty consists in refusing to satisfy them, with the whole process of rejection from the entire nature and a transformation to follow.

For those that live primarily in the mind, the widest range of difficulties arise from a failure to understand, to understand the out-of-placeness of things, chaos, injustice, contradictions in life.... Here, in order to overcome the difficulty we have to grow in mind, follow step by step the cause, and look for a pattern in which the difficulty falls in place. And that pattern is never complete on this side of the ego-walls....

Difficulties born of physical privation often build in the being a deep and lasting strength. Accidents, death, tragedy remind us of the need of the permanent, the perfect, which are found nowhere here, and of the quest not yet undertaken of the beyond.

In all cases, the conquest of difficulty always draws us out of our little shell, with the supreme satisfaction of a growing self-recovery.

SPEECH BY OSCAR LÄSSER

Who likes difficulties? Probably not many of us. The majority prefer to sail along smoothly, avoiding obstacles. However, are not difficulties a source of progress and thus our best friends in the course of our evolution? Without difficulties, would we not be satisfied with what we are and probably not progress at all?

Difficulties are there to be surmounted and conquered. Their sole *raison d'être* is to make us stronger, more perfect and more conscious. Once conquered, the obstacles will vanish into thin air. It is quite obvious that people who aspire and try to lead a better life will encounter many more difficulties and resistances than the average men who try to live happily and merrily from day to day. But those who aspire for the supreme aim of Integral Yoga — the complete transformation and divinisation of man — must be prepared to battle against Himalayan obstacles. That is one of the reasons why the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Integral Yoga is not meant for the weak. A strong constitution, a well-developed personality and a solid mind and nerves must be prepared first.

The great secret of the Integral Yoga is intrinsically related to our difficulties: the higher we want to fly in the divine skies, the lower we have to plunge into the sea of darkness; or using a metaphor we could say: the higher we want to build a sky-scraper, the deeper we have to lay the foundations. While ordinary man lives in a very limited and shallow range of consciousness, the aspirant who wants to conquer the peaks of Light must also plunge into the hell of his subconscient nature, one of the main sources of the aspirant's difficulties.

That is why the attempt of a sadhak to appear virtuous and pure is hypocritical. Experience of universal nature-forces shows that we are all subject to certain elementary currents and that the impulses of the lower obscure consciousness cannot be completely foreign to any man. "None can reach heaven who has not passed through hell,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo in *Savitri*. The first tangible result of the action of the higher Force in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga can be the awakening of new powers and faculties on the mental and higher vital levels; this is often followed by an upsurge of the lower vital and physical impurities from their subconscient source as well as from the ignorant universal Nature. This close and strange interaction between the supraconscient and the subconscient is at the root of all yogic difficulties and integral progress. The Mother in one of her talks with the disciples stresses the same phenomenon: "When you represent the possibility of a victory, you have always in you the thing opposed to this victory, which is your perpetual torment. When you see a very black shadow somewhere, something that is truly painful, you may be sure that you have the possibility of the corresponding light."[2] The same point is explained by her in the following report based on a talk by her:

"The nature of your difficulty indicates the nature of the victory you will gain, the victory you will exemplify in Yoga. Thus, if there is persistent selfishness, it points to a universal realisation as your most prominent achievement in the future. And, when selfishness is there, you have also the power to reverse this very difficulty into its opposite, a victory of utter wideness.

"When you have something to realise, you will have in you just the characteristic which is the contradiction of that something. Face to face with the defect, the difficulty, you say, 'Oh, I am like that! How awful it is!' But you ought to see the truth of the situation. Say to yourself, 'My difficulty shows me clearly what I have ultimately to represent. To reach the absolute negation of it, the quality at the other pole — this is my mission.'

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book Two, Canto Eight, p. 227.
[2] Quoted by Satprem, *The Adventure of Consciousness* (1968), p. 260.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Even in ordinary life, we have sometimes the experience of contraries. He who is very timid and has no courage in front of circumstances proves capable of bearing the most!

"To one who has the aspiration for the Divine, the difficulty which is always before him is the door by which he will attain God in his own individual manner: it is his particular path towards the Divine Realisation.

"There is also the fact that if somebody has a hundred difficulties it means he will have a tremendous realisation — provided, of course, there are in him patience and endurance and he keeps the aspiring flame of Agni burning against those defects.

"And remember: the Grace of the Divine is generally proportioned to your difficulties."[1]

Therefore, let us take the hurdles of the obstacle race of terrestrial existence with sportsman-like enthusiasm and let us be happy and proud to be graced with the elixir of progress: difficulties and obstacles.

In order to turn difficulties into opportunities for progress it is essential not to identify ourselves with them, because it is much easier to conquer a difficulty by detaching oneself calmly from it. As long as you speak of "your" difficulty it will be extremely hard and painful to surmount it. So the Mother says:

"When you have, for example, thoughts, feelings or reactions which you do not like, a movement of anger, spite or insincerity which you want to get rid of, your effort in this direction is painful, it hurts you like a tearing.... You feel the pain, because you are under the illusion that the thing that you pull out is a part of your own self. But it is not true. The same thing may happen exactly in all the details and yet you would not feel the shadow of a pain; on the contrary, it might fill you with an ecstatic joy.

"In one case you identify yourself with the adverse forces that you want to throw off and so lay yourself open to their influence; in the other case you have sufficiently detached yourself from them and they have no effect upon you. Then, instead of feeling the negative side that they represent, you feel the positive side which the Divine represents in the experience. It is the Divine Grace that makes you progress and with the Grace comes the Divine Joy. But if instead of identifying yourself with the Grace that makes you progress, you identify yourself with the ugly thing you want to get rid of, naturally you feel like it and you suffer."[2]

Each depression is an indication that one is not sufficiently detached from

[1] *Mother India*, May 1965, p. 6.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1956, pp. 61-63.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"one's" difficulties. It is also a sign of pointed egoism: our weak but proud ego revolts and goes on strike because it has failed to conquer alone without the Divine's help. When we are before a so-called unsurmountable obstacle or when a depression tries to take hold of us, let us become quiet and offer our troubles to the Divine. If the offering is made sincerely and with confidence, the Divine will take over the responsibility and do whatever is needed.

The vital, the dynamic realising life part, is in many of us one of the principal sources of difficulties, because it tends to jump to extremes: it may be over-enthusiastic, expecting that the transformation will happen the very next day. Obviously, this does not happen. Then it becomes depressed and retires into a corner, refusing to collaborate, telling that one's aspiration is a utopia not worth bothering about. This is one of the pitfalls one must avoid with care. As the Mother advises: "As soon as there is the least sign of discontent, of displeasure, the vital must be spoken to like this: 'My friend, you must keep quiet, you must do what you are told to do, otherwise you will have a bad time with me.' If it is on the other hand over-enthusiastic and says: 'Everything must be done now, right away', you reply, 'Just be calm. Your energy is excellent but you must not spend it all in five minutes. We shall have need of it for a long time, conserve it preciously and as the need occurs, I shall call upon your good will. You will show that you are full of good will, you will obey, you will not grumble, you will not protest, you will not revolt, you will say, yes, yes. You will make a little sacrifice when one asks it of you, you will answer with a heartfelt Yes.'" And the Mother continues in the same talk: "Take note, it is very important — when you have to deal with your vital, be very careful to keep in a good mood, that is to say, when you see anger is rising, start laughing. Instead of getting depressed and saying, 'Oh, in spite of all my efforts, this begins again', you begin to laugh and say, 'Well, so we are not finished with it yet! Come now, don't you see you are being ridiculous? You know quite well that you are being silly; is it worthwhile getting angry over?' Good-humouredly, you teach it this lesson. And, you'll see, after some time it does not get angry any more." [1]

To overcome a difficulty can be a very long and laborious job and even when we are sure that we have finally got rid of it, a subconscious impulse might bring it suddenly to the surface again when we are off-guard. In such a case it is of no use to wring one's hands in despair. A strong and unfaltering perseverance is the remedy. We should be ready to persevere any number of times, even, if necessary, for one or several lives; with such an attitude we would surely reach the goal by the most direct road. The important thing is to be prepared to fall a million times if necessary and to get up each time with more perseverance and sincerity. Our outward nature may be a very recalcitrant and slow learner, but if we open ourselves and offer our mistakes and

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1965, pp. 53-55.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

falls calmly, sincerely and in a detached manner to the Divine, we shall be victorious in the end. Let us remember that each fall can be a further step towards perfection. Many falls are inevitable and necessary if a baby wants to learn to walk:

"As a child who learns to walk can walk not long."[1]

The Lord, or the supreme Diplomat, as Sri Aurobindo calls Him in the following *Savitri* passage, lets us fall down into the dark abyss so that we may rise higher consequently:

"Only a while at first these heavenlier states,
These large wide-poised upliftings could endure.
The high and luminous tension breaks too soon,
The body's stone stillness and the life's hushed trance,
The breathless might and calm of silent mind;
Or slowly they fail as sets a golden day.
The restless nether members tire of peace;
A nostalgia of old little works and joys,
A need to call back small familiar selves,
To tread the accustomed and inferior way,
The need to rest in a natural poise of fall,
As a child who learns to walk can walk not long,
Replace the titan will for ever to climb,
On the heart's altar dim the sacred fire.
An old pull of subconscious cords renews;
It draws the unwilling spirit from the heights,
Or a dull gravitation drags us down
To the blind driven inertia of our base.
This too the supreme Diplomat can use,
He makes our fall a means for greater rise."[2]

No obstacle on our way can be too big for us. The more we become conscious of the obstacle, the more the Grace is there to give us the capacity and the force to resolve it. Let us therefore be heroic soldiers of the Truth and face, fight and finally overcome! A cowardly attitude, suppression or evasion bar all progress. We should also not fall into the other extreme by looking for difficulties or by creating them deliberately as many ascetics do, for this may lead to serious unbalancing. Difficulties shall come all by themselves when the time is ripe and we are ready to face them.

And when they come (and they will certainly come) we must widen our

[1] [2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book One, Canto Three, p. 34.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

consciousness as much as possible, because difficulties are ultimately the result of our ego, of our narrow-mindedness. So instead of becoming tense, let us relax, widen, offer ourselves before the Light. Then, as the Mother assures us, three-fourths of the knot is already undone and the rest will be untied by our call to the Light.

Let us also focus as much as possible on the highest and most luminous goal we can conceive, the marvellous promise of an integral transformation. To dwell too much on one's difficulties or to be depressed by falls whose ultimate function is to teach, is unhealthy.

Concluding, I would like to mention the sunlit path of our yoga, *i.e.*, the state when, after a long and arduous sadhana and purification, our whole being becomes a manifestation of our soul or of the Spirit. Then the Ananda of yoga really starts: all our actions and works are turned into a joyous and spontaneous divine play and the grey fog of our difficulties is burnt up in no time by the joyous and intense rays of the manifest Divine in us. "For he on honey dew hath fed/ And drunk the milk of Paradise." [1] This need not be so far-off as we perhaps think.

As the Mother says:

"Some follow the straight path and quickly arrive at the goal. Others, on the contrary, prefer labyrinths and need longer time, but the end is the same....

"Note this particularly, you are given a full freedom of choice. If you decide within yourself that you will reach the goal in this life, you will do so. I do not mean that you will have to hold your decision constantly in your consciousness or repeat it continuously — in that case you would succeed in twelve months. I mean if you are suddenly taken up by this resolution: 'This is what I want' — even once, in a flash — that is a seal put upon your life.

"It is no reason, however, to lose your time on the way; it is no reason why you should follow all the meanderings of the labyrinth and arrive at the goal, decreased by all that you have lost, spent, wasted on the way. But in any case it is a reason why you should never despair whatever the obstacles and difficulties." [2]

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

This is a practical question and needs a fitting answer. We know that difficulties always come to those who want to progress and achieve something. Many more besiege those who have taken up Sri Aurobindo's yoga because

[1] Coleridge, *Kubla Khan*. [2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1956, p. 93.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

nothing short of perfection is the goal set before us in every field on all the planes of consciousness. In such conditions I think the first requirement is faith that the defects in our nature and the difficulties we come across, whether physical, vital or mental — and however great they may seem — can be conquered and changed by aspiration, perseverance and the action of the Divine's Grace.

But of course, we must be able to recognise the thing as a difficulty to be overcome, and not accept it as an inherent part of ourselves, an unchangeable constant. Or, erring in the other extreme, how often do we not make a mountain of it, as if the whole responsibility of its existence in us and its continued influence were ours. Everyone has to fight against something or other in his nature and as difficulties come always in proportion to our individual capacity, to each one his difficulties seem very great.

It is very important, therefore, not to take the side of the difficulty, feeling as if we were entirely that and identifying ourselves with that little part of our being. We have to try to widen our consciousness each time we come across something unpleasant, a barrier, a hindrance to our true development. If we can put ourselves on the side of that part in us which is luminous and full of goodwill and aspiration, the rest can turn more easily to the Mother's Light and change at its own pace.

Above all, we must not try to force a change in us by setting up rigid rules. Every progress comes in its own time, when the whole being is ready to make it. It is interesting to note, however, that when we start feeling the need of the change it is usually the right time to do something about it. We, on our part, could only accelerate the movement by a clear insight into our shortcomings and a constant aspiration to surpass them.

But, as Sri Aurobindo says :

"These fluctuations in the force of the aspiration and the power of the sadhana are unavoidable and common to all sadhaks until the whole being has been made ready for the transformation. When the psychic is in front and active and the mind and vital consent, then there is intensity. When the psychic is less prominent and the lower vital has its ordinary movements or the mind its ignorant action, then the opposing forces can come in unless the sadhak is very vigilant. Inertia comes usually from the ordinary physical consciousness, especially when the vital is not actively supporting the sadhana. These things can only be cured by a persistent bringing down of the higher spiritual consciousness into all the parts of the being." [1]

The only way is to remember always:

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 913.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"The road of yoga is long, every inch of ground has to be won against much resistance and no quality is more needed by the sadhak than patience and single-minded perseverance with a faith that remains firm through all difficulties, delays and apparent failures." [1]

Thus we shall achieve that inner progress towards which all external happenings point — if they are seen in the true light of the soul.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"In the way that one treads with the greater Light above, even every difficulty gives its help and has its value and Night itself carries in it the burden of the Light that has to be."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, p. 1638.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"In the play of the cosmic forces, the will in the cosmos — as one might say — does not always work apparently in favour of a smooth and direct line for the work or the sadhana; it often brings in what seem to be upheavals, sudden turns which break or deflect the line, opposing or upsetting circumstances or perplexing departures from what had been temporarily settled or established. The one thing is to preserve equanimity and make an opportunity and means of progress out of all that happens in the course of the life and the sadhana. There is a higher secret Will transcendent behind the play and will of the cosmic forces — a play which is always a mixture of things favourable and things adverse — and it is that Will which one must wait upon and have faith in; but you must not expect to be able always to understand its workings. The mind wants this or that to be done, the line once taken to be maintained, but what the mind wants is not at all always what is intended in a larger purpose. One has to follow indeed a fixed central aim in the sadhana and not deviate from it, but not to build on outward circumstances, conditions, etc., as if they were fundamental things."

(*Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 579-80.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 630.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"There can be no failure; for whatever happens is the intention of the Master of the worlds, not final, but a step on his way, and if it appears as an opposition, a defeat, a denial, even for the moment a total denial of the aim set before the instrumental being, it is so only in appearance and afterwards it will appear in its right place in the economy of his action — a fuller supramental vision may even see at once or beforehand its necessity and its true relation to the eventual result to which it seems so contrary and even perhaps its definite prohibition. Or, if — while the light is deficient, — there has been a misinterpretation whether with regard to the aim or the course of the action and the steps of the result, the failure comes as a rectification and is calmly accepted without bringing discouragement or a fluctuation of the will. In the end it is found that there is no such thing as failure and the soul takes an equal passive or active delight in all happenings as the steps and the formulations of the divine Will. The same evolution takes place with regard to good fortune and ill fortune, the pleasant and the unpleasant in every form, *maṅgala amaṅgala, priya apriya.*"

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, pp.698-699.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"For in all happenings we shall see the will of the Master of all works and results and a step in the evolving expression of the Divine. He manifests himself, to those who have the inner eye that sees, in forces and their play and results as well as in things and in creatures. All things move towards a divine event; each experience, suffering and want no less than joy and satisfaction is a necessary link in the carrying out of a universal movement which it is our business to understand and second. To revolt, to condemn, to cry out is the impulse of our unchastened and ignorant instincts. Revolt like everything else has its uses in the play and is even necessary, helpful, decreed for the divine development in its own time and stage; but the movement of an ignorant rebellion belongs to the stage of the soul's childhood or to its raw adolescence. The ripened soul does not condemn but seeks to understand and master, does not cry out but accepts or toils to improve and perfect, does not revolt inwardly but labours to obey and fulfil and transfigure. Therefore we shall receive all things with an equal soul from the hands of the Master. Failure we shall admit as a passage as calmly as success until the hour of the divine victory arrives. Our souls and minds and bodies will remain unshaken by acutest sorrow and suffering and pain if in the divine dispensation they come to us, unoverpowered by intensest joy and pleasure. Thus supremely balanced we shall continue steadily on our way meeting all things with an

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

equal calm until we are ready for a more exalted status and can enter into the supreme and universal Ananda."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p.213.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

THE UTILITY OF DIFFICULTIES

"Difficulties are sent to us exclusively to make the realisation more perfect.

"Every time we try to realise something and meet a resistance or even a failure — what appears to be a failure — we must know and never forget that it is there exclusively, absolutely in order that the realisation may be more perfect!

"Therefore this habit of getting dejected, discouraged or even uneasy, or cursing yourself or telling yourself: 'There I have again committed a blunder...', all that is complete stupidity.

"Say simply: 'We ourselves do not know how to do things as they should be done; well, things are done for us, come what may!' If we could only see to what extent that which seems indeed to be a difficulty, a blunder, a failure, an obstacle is there just to help us that the realisation may be more perfect.

"Once you know that, all becomes easy."

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Feb. 1959.)

*
**

"Everyone possesses in a large measure, and the exceptional individual in an increasing degree of precision, two opposite tendencies in the character, almost in equal proportions, which are like the light and the shadow of the same thing. Thus a man who has the capacity of being exceptionally generous suddenly finds rushing up in his nature an obstinate avarice; the courageous would be somewhere a coward and the good suddenly have wicked impulses. Life seems to endow everyone, along with the possibility of expressing an ideal, with contrary elements in him representing in a concrete manner the battle he has to wage and the victory he has to win so that the realisation may be possible."

(*On Education*, 1952, pp.29-30.) THE MOTHER

The Mother's remarks on the above quotations:

"The quotations are all right. You can read them at the Seminar."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SIXTH SEMINAR

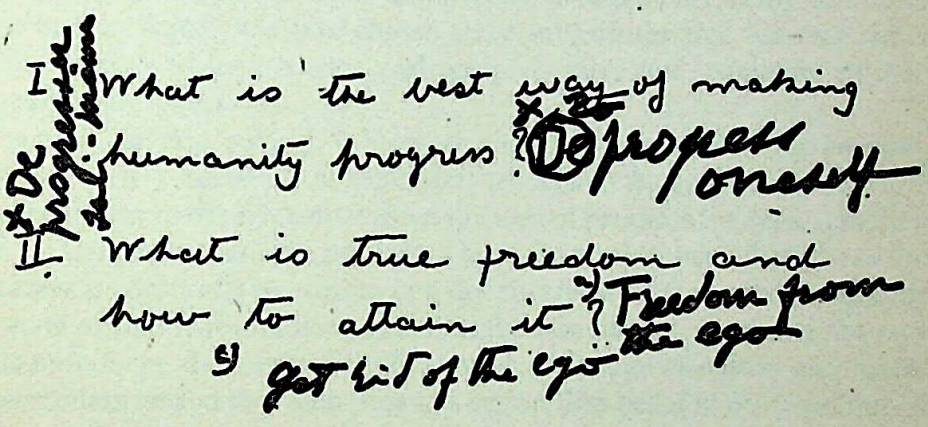
21 November 1965

SUBJECTS APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:

1. "What is the best way of making humanity progress?"

2. "What is true freedom and how to attain it?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:



1. "De progresser soi-même."
   "To progress oneself."

2. "a) Freedom from the ego."
   "b) Get rid of the ego."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

I. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY OF MAKING HUMANITY PROGRESS?

II. WHAT IS TRUE FREEDOM AND HOW TO ATTAIN IT?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The two subjects that we have for this Seminar have been of perennial interest to the human mind through the ages. Several thinkers, philosophers, scientists and men of action of the past and the present have viewed these problems from different angles and provided different answers according to their predilections. We here have the great privilege of having at our disposal the views of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on these problems fully explained in their writings. But it is necessary for us to have a precise understanding of their views; otherwise our ideas about these problems are likely to remain vague and confused. We have chosen these subjects for this Seminar with a view to help us to have a clear and comprehensive understanding of these very important issues.

About the first subject — *What is the best way of making humanity progress?* — it is necessary at the outset to define clearly what we mean by progress. Strange though it may seem, the idea of progress is a typical modern idea. In the ancient and the mediaeval ages the predominant belief was that humanity is constantly regressing in a downward lapse from an original perfect state or that it was moving round in the same circle, repeating the same cyclic movement. It is only with the advent of the age of reason and science in the modern period that man began to have a firm belief in the possibility of a continuous forward progress towards a perfect individual and social existence. But this rational scientific belief, which was so dominant in the 19th century in Europe, has now suffered a severe set-back because it has now become patently evident that all the development achieved in the external sphere of life with the help of reason and science is by itself not only cumbersome and meaningless but even dangerous because it has led to an increasing disequilibrium which may eventually result in a collapse and even self-destruction of the human race. The whole edifice of modern civilisation has been declared by some prominent thinkers of the present day to be an artificial and monstrous overgrowth which must be scrapped if humanity is to regain its natural spontaneity, balance and harmony. This civilisation, they say, is a disease, an abnormality, a malignant perversity which will destroy the human race if left unchecked. The only way to check it is to throw away all the paraphernalia of the civilisation and to revert to the natural simplicity of the primitive man. Go back to nature, they cry, if you want to regain health of the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

body, peace of the mind and joy of the heart. Progress lies not in moving forward and upward but in turning backward and downward.

There are others who say that the real cause of the evils of modern life is its excessive one-sided preoccupation with the lower material interests and pursuits and its neglect of the higher values and nobler ideals. The modern man has made an unparalleled progress in specialised science, technology, mechanised mass-production, etc., but has neglected or debased true art, ethics, philosophy and other liberal and cultural pursuits. This has brought about an artificiality, an unbalance and an inner malaise in his life. This can only be set right by a radical turning towards the higher aims and pursuits and a greater preoccupation with them than with the lower material ones. That alone can cure the modern man of his inner unbalance and set him firmly on the true path of progress.

There are still others who maintain that this too will not suffice to solve the problem of modern humanity. What is needed, they say, is not merely a turning to higher cultural aims and pursuits but a radical change in the consciousness of man. Man must transcend the limitations of his present mental consciousness and realise the Spirit. But most of those who advocate this spiritual solution give it a religious form. Either some orthodox or reformist religious formula is proposed by them as the sure means of salvation and the true way of progress towards perfection in the Spirit or God.

But according to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother this religious solution will not solve the malady of modern humanity. The religious approach to God belongs to man's past evolution and will not serve his present need when a bold leap into his future potentialities is demanded by evolutionary Nature. The spiritual way is the right way of man's future progress but it has to extend beyond the narrow limitations of the religious formula. The evolutionary conversion of consciousness demanded of the modern man has to be something more radical and drastic than a religious change. A total transmutation of man's entire inner and outer consciousness and life in the highest Truth of the Supermind is the only decisive solution of the present crisis of humanity and the only way of its progress towards its ultimate perfection.

This is the view of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother about humanity's progress stated in the briefest manner. But the question still remains: What can an individual who is eager to help humanity actually do to make it progress on the right path? What is the best way which will prove most effective in his endeavour? The answer to this question is so obvious that it is surprising that most of the people fail to realise it. If you have arrived at the conviction that the only sure way for humanity to progress is a total spiritual conversion of the human consciousness, then obviously you must yourself first work out that conversion in yourself before you can help others to do so. However eager you may be to help others on the spiritual path, how can you

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

really do so unless you have yourself realised the Spirit? Even with the best of sincerity and goodwill, is it not presumptuous on your part to try to help others to make a spiritual change without having first worked out that change in yourself? How can you help others to realise what you have not realised yourself? How can you give light to others when you are yourself blind?

It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother stress the necessity of concentrating on one's own sadhana and not to be over-eager to help others. The best way to help others is to help yourself — this is their repeated injunction. This initial preoccupation with one's own spiritual progress is certainly not egoistic; it is in fact the indispensable condition and the best way to make others progress. That is why Sri Aurobindo has said: "The Mother's victory is essentially a victory of each sadhak over himself." That is also why, after the manifestation of the supramental Truth, the Mother is asking each one: "Are you ready?"

*

The second subject that we have for this Seminar — *What is true freedom and how to attain it?* — can be approached in several ways but, whatever the approach, the concluding answer from Sri Aurobindo's standpoint would be the same.

By freedom we generally mean freedom from all external restraints and compulsions. In the political sphere, for example, the individual claims his inherent right to certain fundamental liberties as against the authority of the State. In the wider social life, in his relations with others, he claims the freedom to live and act as he likes without interference from others. But this claim, if it takes an exclusive egoistic form, cannot be considered legitimate because it seeks to justify the individual's demand to satisfy his own desires and interests without any check or restraint and in complete disregard of the interests of others. Any kind of just and harmonious collective life would become impossible if this egoistic demand is allowed its uncurbed expression.

The individual's claim to freedom from external control can only be justified when he learns to control himself from within. External regulation can be dispensed with only when man regulates himself by an inner law. Self-discipline alone can make external discipline unnecessary. So long as man lives in his ego and seeks satisfaction of his selfish desires and passions he cannot deserve freedom from external compulsion. He must find his true inner self and obey its law before he can outgrow the need of obedience to outer law.

But apart from this question of freedom in social relations, can it be said that a person who tries to live in egoistic freedom is really free? Even if he manages to remain free of all external control, is he not living and acting

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

under the blinding compulsion of the ignorant forces of lower Nature which secretly drive and determine his so-called personal free will?

This brings us to the fundamental question of the reality of human free will. Can human will, so long as man lives in his ego, be ever really free? Well, whatever may be the views of other thinkers and philosophers, and they are legion, Sri Aurobindo's view is that it cannot be free. As he says: "At best we have only the poor relative freedom which by us is ignorantly called free will. But that is at bottom illusory, since it is the modes of Nature that express themselves through our personal will; it is force of Nature, grasping us, ungrasped by us that determines what we shall will and how we shall will it. Nature, not an independent ego, chooses what object we shall seek, whether by reasoned will or unreflecting impulse, at any moment of our existence." [1]

Thus our idea of human free will in the sense of an egoistic will choosing and acting independently is, according to Sri Aurobindo, an illusion. Our so-called free will is in reality nothing else but an unconscious subjection to Nature. But Nature herself is governed by the will of the Spirit or the Divine which alone is really free. As Sri Aurobindo says: "The only free will in the world is the one divine Will of which Nature is the executrix." [2]

The important question then is: If our present human will is not free, can it be made free? Can we attain true freedom even though we do not possess it now? The answer is already implied in the extract from Sri Aurobindo which I have just now read. Since the one divine Will alone is free, our own will can become free by union with that divine Will. That is only possible when we cease to live in the ego and find our true self which is eternally one with the Divine. The ego, even in its most exalted and refined forms, will always remain subject to ignorant Nature and will be consciously or unconsciously driven by her impulsion. It is only by the annihilation of our ego and the discovery of our true self and individuality that we can rise above subjection to Nature and find our true and lasting freedom in union with the Divine.

But that union with the Divine comes by surrender to Him and therefore true freedom can be attained only by a total surrender or submission to His Will. The freedom which we realise by the discovery of our self is not anything separate or different from the one divine Will. It is in fact the same Will freely expressed in and through us as a result of our complete submission to it.

We have therefore to say that true freedom consists in complete subjection to the Divine. This sounds like a paradox but it is the only way of stating the truth. The word 'freedom' is in fact a misnomer when used in reference to anyone or anything other than the one Divine or the Supreme Lord. He alone is free. Man, so long as he lives in his ego, is a slave of Nature. When he finds his true self and lives in it he is a slave of God. Spiritual freedom, which is the

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 88.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

only true freedom, is nothing else but willing slavery to God. That is why Sri Aurobindo says that there is no such thing as freedom; it is only a question of choosing between two masters — Nature or God.

How to make this choice? It is very simple. We have only to say to the Lord in all sincerity: *Let Thy Will be done.*

SPEECH BY SWADESH CHATTERJI

In this world of toil and strife, at one time or another the force of circumstances leads us to doubt the very existence of freedom. The layman has a vague chimerical idea of total freedom and hence holds it impossible to manifest it in his life upon this earth. Our liberty is restricted by state-laws, social dogmas, our own beliefs, weaknesses, etc. Our entire life is as if compelled to follow a set groove and we know not a way out of this horrible rut which perhaps leads finally to the most dismal abyss. It becomes all the more imperative to discover a kindly light to lead us from dark night to broad daylight.

Before we can take a single step towards the attainment of freedom, we must know what it is. Unfortunately many conceive of absolute freedom to be that state of circumstances where one can indulge in all sorts of whims and caprices and satisfy one's innumerable desires. Once and for all let us shun this idea, for, instead of giving us the joy of being unlimited, it sheds the poison of satiety and makes a slave out of us. Herein lies a very important point. As long as we live in our ordinary consciousness, that is, in the body, heart and mind there cannot be total freedom because the body is subject to pain and disease, the heart is a slave to its passions and the mind is taken by worries and fears. Thus the root cause of all our limitations is the identification with the body-heart-mind complex. To live in this triple formula and seek for freedom is an utopian dream; in no way can it assure a liberty which is not caught within the numerous eddies of our life.

True freedom lies in a fourth principle of our existence. This is the fundamental principle, the principle of our soul. Alone by the total identification of our entire being with the soul can we attain to genuine and perpetual freedom. Once we are one with the essence of our being, no power however formidable can hamper the claim of the soul's liberty. It is only then that the freedom of the body, heart and mind which we vainly seek in external conditions can be achieved. A divine Consciousness takes possession of these and turns them into perfect instruments of divine expression; for, "When the soul claims freedom," says Sri Aurobindo, "it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being." [1] So the

[1] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 547.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

freedom of our soul is true freedom.

The first step towards its attainment must then be the clear realisation that all physical conditions, however ideal, will finally bind us in chains of pain, desire and worry after a temporary pretence of liberty. We must strongly feel the necessity to break off the worldly ties and soar into the Boundless. This urge can be satisfied by the discovery of the liberation of the soul. As the Mother says: "To be aware of the liberation of your soul means that you are sufficiently conscious of your soul to feel that something deep in you is quite free, independent of people and circumstances, untouched by grief, displeasure or anger, always calm and with a quiet contentment." [1] This awareness does not come in a day or two, one has to undergo a disciplined practice. The Mother has clearly given us a process, laid down a *mārga* which enables us to plunge deep into ourselves, cast away the slough of our present self and fuse in the Truth of our being which is eternally free. She says:

"For going within you must sit comfortably or lie down, gather and bring back all the threads of your consciousness which are tied up to all the people and the things around you, all that you think of, all that you want to do — etc., etc.

"Once this is done you focus all your attention inside yourself, deep inside your chest and you concentrate there until you reach a state of peace and immobility. You may not succeed from the first time — but you will try again and again until you succeed. In the state of quiet and silent immobility, you will be in contact with your soul, unite with it and feel *free*."[2]

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

Freedom is the primary condition for making any progress in any field of life, inner as well as outer. It is the mainspring for a total and integral development of our being in its various aspects, for a full flowering of all the capacities and potentialities of the soul through the perfection of its instruments.

True freedom is the state of our being as well as the state of circumstances when we can freely and spontaneously grow up and live in accordance with the deepest truth or law of our own being, in the light of the spirit, unhampered by the obstacles of our ordinary mental, vital and physical nature, and where the psychic being is our paramount leader and guide.

Usually, freedom is mistaken for licence. By freedom, people generally

[1] *White Roses* (1973), pp. 69-70.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

understand that one is free to move in life just the way one likes, following one's own whims and caprices whatsoever. And generally it is one's unruly vital nature which is then in the forefront dominating the whole being, the soul being compelled to recede far behind. Apparently, this goes by the name of freedom. But properly speaking, this is nothing but abuse of freedom. Or, to be more precise, this is slavery rather than true freedom. It is our bondage to the lower impulses and desires, to the forces of darkness and falsehood. Instead of being free, we are actually bound down and ruled by the forces of ignorance and obscurity.

True freedom is spiritual freedom. It consists in vanquishing the lower forces, in getting complete control and mastery over the desires, impulses, greed, anger, jealousy, selfishness, grief, ill-will, inertia, incapacity, etc. True freedom implies a perfect equality and poise of our being and nature totally free from the dualities of Nature, and unaffected by and uninvolved in any happening whatsoever, inward as well as outward; it also implies that one should be a conscious instrument in the hands of the Spirit, the Master of our being and nature. And true freedom not only brings about a harmony in the divergent parts of our own being but a unity with all other beings, as well as a oneness with the Divine Himself.

In the state of true freedom of the self, our destiny or fate will not lie at the mercy of the ignorant universal forces, ruled and determined by the blind forces of Nature, but it is our free will, the will of the spirit within us which will consciously control and shape our destiny.

Now, what is the cause of this bondage, this limitation? What are the factors that stand in the way of our true freedom?

Well, in the first instance, this is a self-chosen imprisonment in Ignorance imposed by the Spirit itself with a view to realising itself in multiplicity with its endless possibilities through its gradual evolution from inconscient Matter to its superconscient self-expression and self-fulfilment in the manifested universe.

And once the Spirit has taken a plunge into the Inconscience, separating itself from its source, the fetters that bind us most are ego and desire.

We are constantly influenced and dominated by the modes of Nature, the triple gunas, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. "This triple power is at the same time a triple cord of bondage."[1] The characteristics of tamas are inertia, incapacity and unconsciousness. It binds us by "sloth and indolence and inactivity and mechanical routine and the mind's torpor and life's sleep and the soul's slumber."[2] The characteristics of rajas are desire and ambition, energy and activity. It binds us by attachment to the object of desire, struggle for power, passion and emotion. The characteristics of sattwa are clarity of

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p.416.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 221.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

understanding, light and happiness, peace and poise. But this too has its limitations and inadequacies, being unable to act perfectly all by itself without the aid of rajas, the driving force. Without rajas, sattwa gradually tends to verge towards tamas; and with rajas, it is likely to be coloured by the imperfections of rajas. The Gita says,

सत्त्वं सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत॥

"Sattwa attaches to happiness, rajas to action, O Bharata; tamas covers up the knowledge and attaches to negligence of error and inaction."[1]

The combined actions of sattwa and rajas "may be more exalted in their scope and spirit and action than before, but they are not the peace, the freedom, the power, the self-mastery at which we long to arrive."[2]

The natural hold of tamas is in the physical, that of rajas in the vital, and that of sattwa in the mind. These gunas are interwoven and intermingled in their working in our nature. All the three modes are present in everybody in varying degrees and shifting combinations. The type and nature of a man is determined by the predominance of one or other of the gunas in him. The combination of the mental, vital and physical stuff constitutes our ego or surface personality.

Due to the intricate interplay of the gunas our being is constantly assailed by the dualities of Nature. And we move between the contrary ideas and feelings of good and evil, love and hatred, joy and sorrow, success and failure, praise and blame, and so on. This creates an instability in the whole being and keeps the being chained to the imperfections of Nature.

From what we have said above, it appears that it is our ego affected and governed by the three qualitative modes of Nature that constitutes the main barrier to our freedom. "There is a sattwic as well as a rajasic or tamasic egoism, at the highest an egoism of knowledge or virtue; but the mind's egoism of whatever type is incompatible with liberation."[3]

So, now, what is the way out of this bondage and limitation? How to attain the integral freedom?

Some spiritual systems believe in complete withdrawal from earthly life which according to them is full of incorrigible falsehood. In their view, the final liberation can be achieved only in the Abode of the Spirit.

But our way, as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, is not

[1] *Gita*, Ch. XIV, Verse 9. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by A. B. Roy, p. 205.

[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 225.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 660.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to reject or renounce life, leaving it to its pitiable fate, but to transform material life and consciousness and attain realisation and liberation of the embodied spirit in the terrestrial manifestation itself.

In order to attain perfect freedom we must endeavour to rise above the ego sense as well as above the gunas of Prakriti. This, in fact, ensures a two-fold liberation, the liberation of the Spirit and also that of the instrumental Nature.

The ego idea implies a division, a separation from the one Divine, universal and transcendent, whereas true freedom implies a unity and oneness with the Divine in its transcendent, cosmic and individual aspects. So we must strive to rise above our limited ego and realise this oneness with the Divine in order to achieve the liberation of the Spirit.

In order to be free from ego, we must conquer desire which is "the principal sign and knot of ego." "These two things are one, liberation from the will that is of the nature of desire and liberation from the ego, and the oneness which is brought about by the happy loss of the will of desire and the ego, is the essence of Mukti."[1] It means a return of the being to its original free self and divine will.

This can be effected by rising above the gunas, by getting ourselves detached from their play in our nature as also by gaining a supremacy over them. The Gita says,

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टाऽनुपश्यति।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति॥

"When the seer perceives that the modes of Nature are the whole agency and cause of works and knows and turns to That which is supreme above the gunas, he attains to *madbhāva* (the movement and status of the Divine)."[2]

Now, does this mean a cessation of all action, since it is the Nature which through her gunas drives us to act in particular ways? But the Gita advises us to continue to act and yet be free from the gunas. And the Gita shows the way also by saying that we should do desireless action, by renouncing our attachment to the fruit of action; and the Gita's injunction goes further by asking us to renounce our attachment to the work as well. Instead of doing work out of personal desire or preference, we should work disinterestedly for the sake of the Divine. This will greatly help the purification and upliftment of our nature, which are indispensable for the attainment of liberation.

The soul can draw back from the turmoils of the gunas and observe the

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 654.

[2] *Gita*, Ch. XIV, Verse 19. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 209.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

play of the gunas, calm, unmoved and uninvolved. And for this what is needed is to establish a perfect equality and undisturbed calm in our being under all circumstances and happenings; and this should be attended with an inner happiness, a serene joy inherent in the spirit. "For without it we can have no solid basis; and by the pronounced lack of it we shall be constantly falling back to the lower status of desire, ego, duality, ignorance."[1] And the gunas, finding no sanction or support of the Purusha, will gradually fall away.

And the soul does not just remain immobile in its static freedom witnessing the action of the Nature; it can at the same time open itself to a higher Will and Knowledge in order to gain a freedom in its dynamic parts as well. For the freedom to be total and perfect must include in it the liberation of the nature. "A divine unity of the supreme spirit and its supreme nature is the integral liberation."[2]

For this what is needed is a purification of the instruments, particularly of the life-force and the intelligence, *buddhi*, by means of knowledge, work and devotion. "All purification is a release, a delivery; for it is a throwing away of limiting, binding, obscuring imperfections and confusions."[3]

We shall have to proceed by developing the sattwic quality in our nature to its maximum since sattwa is the power of light and knowledge. "To develop Sattwa till it becomes full of spiritual light and calm and happiness is the first condition of this preparatory discipline of the nature."[4] Sattwa is the mediating link between the higher and the lower nature, and without its intervention there can be no transformation of the qualities of rajas and tamas. And then, finally, we shall have to exceed even the sattwic quality and go beyond to its source, the spiritual light and ecstasy.

In fact, all the gunas are to be transformed into their corresponding spiritual powers. Thus tamas should be converted into a divine calm, rajas into the will of the spirit, and sattwa into light. And this is necessary for the integral perfection in our liberation.

And along with the transmutation of the gunas, the dualities of Nature also will automatically lose their sway in us, and cease to exist. The Gita says,

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥

"He should be known as always a Sannyasin (even when he is doing action) who neither dislikes nor desires; for free from the dualities he is released easily and happily from the bondage."[5]

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 696. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 656. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 647.
[4] Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), pp. 453-54.
[5] *Gita*, Ch. V, Verse 3. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 87.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

And "the spirit lives in a universal, infinite and absolute Truth, Good, Beauty, Bliss which is the supramental or ideal divine Nature. The liberation of the Nature becomes one with the liberation of the spirit, and there is founded in the integral freedom the integral perfection."[1]

This is a colossal task demanding a whole-hearted sincerity on our part. In order to achieve a total freedom of our self and nature, a total reversal of our present consciousness, of our lower nature and surface being is the only way out.

We must truly aspire for this great change. And at every step we must remain vigilant so as to detect any wrong movement trying to creep in, and reject it forthwith. This is by way of personal effort; but it is not sufficient by itself. A total surrender and openness to the Divine Mother based on a spontaneous faith is indispensable. The Grace of the Divine Mother can alone effectuate the final transformation and liberation of our Self and Nature from the bondage of lower nature, ignorance and inconscience. As the Mother says, "The only way to be truly free, is to make your surrender to the Divine, total and without reserve. Then you will see that all that ties you, binds you, chains you loses its importance and falls off quite naturally...for with this surrender comes the supreme spiritual freedom."[2]

The Divine alone is truly free. So, in order to attain true freedom, we must rise to the status of the Divine. And to this end we should strive for psychicisation and spiritualisation culminating in supramentalisation of our consciousness. And then by a corresponding descent of the supramental Truth-Consciousness in Matter our lower nature too can be gradually and totally supramentalised.

In fact, the Mother from her personal experience tells us that with the supramental manifestation (which started in 1956) a new freedom has been made possible to the body. She says, "One of the very first results of the supramental manifestation has been to give to the body a freedom and an autonomy which it had never known .... The cells themselves have felt for the first time that they are free, that they have a power of decision."[3]

It is only with the complete divinisation of the earth-nature and earth-consciousness by the supramental Light and Power that true freedom can be attained in its totality and perfection, when the present world liberated from the bondage of falsehood and obscurity, ugliness and discord, unrest and weakness, disease and death will be transfigured into a realm of everlasting Truth and Light, Beauty and Harmony, Peace and Power, Bliss and Immortality.

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 663.
[2] [3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1958.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

Freedom as a moral, political, social, economic, psychological and spiritual condition is the aim of all mankind. Without freedom no proper growth is possible for any human being on earth in whatever stage of development. Without freedom there can be no greatness of spirit, no culture of mind or body. But none of these freedoms, except the psychological and the spiritual freedom, have any permanent value because they are either relative or else dependent upon external circumstances. If we trace the line of growth and the trend of these freedoms to their source, we would discover that spiritual freedom stands at the base of all of them not only as the fountain-head but also as the power of their existence and the truth of their being. All freedom in its quintessence can be seen emerging from the spirit as its manifold manifestation, in society, thought, life, religion, ethics and aesthetics. The curse of mankind as a collective unit and of man as an individual component lies in the ignorance of this central fact. Neither economic nor social freedom can lead man to everlasting happiness; for man is greater than society or the economic system. But at the same time, we cannot ignore these, for they represent important aspects of a nation's organic being.

Freedom is not an exclusive term and its attainment cannot be realised all at once and once for all. We march from social freedom to political freedom and from that to freedom of thought and action, till we attain the highest possible freedom as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo — the spiritual and the supramental freedom. Here there is no division between the Being and the Becoming, the dynamism of Nature and the poise of the free Spirit. That is, we ascend from the more elemental and the crude to the subtlest and the most puissant of all freedoms — that of the soul and the spirit.

If we regard this issue from the point of view of pure rationality, we would find that none is free in the exact and the all-embracing sense of the term. Man is subject to various elements without and within him, in a greater or lesser degree. He is a slave either to the altruistic ideal or to the rajasic ego or he is enchained to habits, formations, limitations, deformations, and all these subjugate him to the power of ignorance. Thus the biblical doctrine of man's free will, or the modern cult of freedom, as the basic factor of his existence, is partially a myth. On the reverse side of the coin, we find that man has the freedom to choose his way of life, thought and growth only in the most superficial sense. And the more one advances and the consciousness becomes refined, there appears always a double or multiple aspect of issues and we are at cross-roads, compelled to make a choice almost at every step, till we have ourselves gone beyond all dualities. This is the enigma freedom bestows upon us. And the riddle of the fateful choice is the result of the freedom given to us

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

as independent beings. But from behind, within or below, other factors are at work, and our immediate task appears to be to discover these influences, and take a wide view of things and be guided by our soul, whose choice alone is right. Otherwise we shall be like a rudderless boat or a horse without reins, unable either to choose rightly, or to foretell the result of our choice together with its chain-reactions.

Our true freedom lies not in the assertion of our egoistic rights, our egoistic principles of so-called self-determination, which is the cover for all types of desires, hungers and covetousness feeding on pride and false self-esteem. It lies rather in the soul which is beyond these lower and deformative elements; it lies in the surrender of our ego and the smaller surface formations to a deeper or higher principle. We must know and recognise this to be the true initiator and guide of all our acts, thoughts and growth. Otherwise, in spite of our mentally calling ourselves free, we shall be led by the Karmic power which acts with a mathematical accuracy and which is born from our own blind or ignorant actions. Or else we may be led by lower impulsions which surge up and betray our freedom by their blinding flares. Once delivered into the hands of the higher power, we shall gradually feel all pressures of lower impulsions removed and we shall be on the path of true freedom. Then our every choice shall be right and our every step shall be a step towards unceasing progress.

As we have remarked earlier, there is a progression in our attainment of freedom. That is, we pass through a hierarchy of unity, liberty and harmony, each step or rung in this great cosmic chain revealing something greater, more puissant and intense of these spiritual principles. For freedom in its ultimate and absolute sense is too difficult to be realised all at once. It needs a great and incredible preparedness on the part of our being, to such a pitch of perfection that it would be impossible to attain it unless we had two opposing elements in our being: on the one hand, the surrender of all we are to the secret guide in us and, on the other, a ruthless and exacting self-analysis. Because it is extremely difficult to get rid of the dominance of ego with all its besetting power of ignorance that stands in the way of perfection, this process of purification is essential. We must become, in other words, worthy of true freedom and bear its full spiritual light.

The ego, in its essential character, is a formation which came into existence for the building up of a form, a definite shape out of the chaotic substance of matter and lower existence. So long as man was in the early stage of evolution this formation, together with its assertion, was inevitable for the purpose of life to be and for the mind to give to itself a clear and well-defined coherence. But when he progressed further, this ego, which was a protection against the powers of disintegration, became a definite hindrance, because man's goal was greater than this ego-centricity. His goal was the realisation

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of his spiritual existence. The West and all nations under the sway of materialism mistook this assertion of the ego as freedom. To do as the instincts dictate to us, to act as an accomplice of dubious powers, or else wallow in the mud of sensuality, these were freedom in the eye of the materialist. But greater than that is the feeling that man is a divine nucleus, a spiritual personality, an iridescent centre come down from the great transcendent Godhead. From this realisation his journey to real freedom has its initiation.

Once we have known what true freedom is, we shall not be waylaid by cruder doctrines, dogmas and opinions which infest the world today. These are only assertions of man's intermediate condition which is a negation of the true principles of freedom. Our freedom shall be based on the freedom of the Spirit and the Eternal. Our liberty shall be not of the form or its derivatives, but of the substance and the essence that constitute man. That is, we shall go from the crude domination of life and thought to the freedom of soul and spirit, which is infinite in its constitution. To know our central being therefore becomes our first necessity. To live in its light and grow in its flame is the next step. Not to be influenced by lesser elements is one of the requisite conditions. To enlarge all consciousness in the light of the central being and refer all actions, decisions and volitions to this unchanging source are also necessary. Not to be influenced by circumstances or their pressure, the weight of the environment which builds our personality as the western psychologist opines, but to be rooted in this central being and act from there and see and judge all things from this viewpoint of soul, forms the still higher step.

But all these are only steps towards the ultimate freedom we envisage here. The yogi of other paths would feel immensely satisfied if he reached this stage. But to us these are only the primary steps. Further and greater freedom comes with our reaching the gnostic consciousness where all dualism ceases and where alone we are totally free from the divisions that confront us in our egoistic ignorance — divisions between God and the world, between our unique personality created around our divine nucleus and our other selves which too are the projections from the Absolute. The division between action and dynamism on one hand and status and poise on the other too shall disappear. Here the actor, the action and the act shall become one great unity. We then shall have no need to become a conscious instrument of the highest power for, with all veils removed, we shall have become ourselves that highest Reality, Consciousness and Felicity without any division. This is freedom in its loftiest and truest sense. This is not the Mukti of the Vedantin or the Goloka of the Vaishnava or the Nirvana of the Buddhist. This is the realisation of highest self and it is in this self that we can know our selves, not as an abstract idea or a remote thing that is realised only in a state of trance, but as a concrete fact realised in everyday life. If this did not become a realised fact of our existence, an integral part of our consciousness in all

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

its aspects and modes, then our freedom would have no decisive meaning. This is the great and unique ideal we have placed before us. This does not mean that we are not conscious of the tremendous difficulties in its realisation. But if we have faith and put ourselves in the hands of the Divine, there is no reason why it cannot be realised.

SPEECH BY MITA CHAKRAVARTI

In our present state of confusion, when we suffer from so many problems and difficulties, it is really difficult to answer the question: "What is true freedom and how to attain it?" The world at present seems to be submerged in problems and humanity seems to be at a loss to come out of them and be free. Everywhere there is an urgent need to be free. Humanity is confounded. We must have freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of action and so on. We must have freedom from hunger, from racial subordination, from the fear of nuclear war. Then a deeper part of us longs for spiritual freedom, that of Buddha's Nirvana or Shankara's Moksha or an escape to some higher heavenly world leaving everything of this physical, vital and mental world behind.

Can any of these be the true freedom? Is it possible that all the sufferings of humanity are only due to the lack of food or other necessary commodities? Or is a free democratic secular and neutral state the answer? If so then today America would not have to face her huge problem of racial segregation nor could India have to suffer from hunger and poverty. History repeats time and again the lesson that no social or political efforts can solve these problems. Man suffers because of his own tyranny. All these problems are due to man's greed for power and money, his selfish narrow egoistic mind, his imperfect idea of physical needs. So the source of the problem is not without but within. Only a total change of our consciousness can bring harmony and happiness on earth.

Is then Nirvana or Moksha the coveted freedom? But neither Nirvana nor Moksha solves these problems. Because, for both the Shankarites and the Buddhists, all this mess created by our vital desires and mental conceptions is beyond any solution. In fact, according to them this world and this life are of no real value, nor of any utility, they are just loads to be carried and should be forsaken as early as possible. The religions too, in their present state, point to us only this path and nothing else. They all say that we can have no freedom from the burdens of this life on earth. It cannot be improved in any way, it has to be endured. The only freedom that we can hope for is in heaven or Swarga, never here on this earth.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Is there then no answer to these problems? Is there no true freedom here on earth? Is the curse of God on Adam eternal? Is life really a mere burden, a confusion of low desires and a limited imperfect tenure?

But that cannot possibly be. If life on earth was just a burden, why was it created? God cannot be a whimsical creator who entertains himself by the struggles and sufferings of man. And indeed He is not so. Earth and life are not a burden but something potentially divine. For, the Mother says, "Life on earth, we consider, is not a passage or a means merely; it must become, through transformation, a goal, a realisation."[1]

According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the aim of life is not to leave this world for the higher truth but to rise and bring the truth down to this world. We shall have to rise out of this ordinary consciousness into the divine consciousness in order to bring down the supramental power which alone can change the ignorance of mind, life and body and transform them. We are here to realise and manifest the divine on earth and to create a divine life in union with the Mother.

This is the divine Will. Man is created to carry out this Will, to fulfil this aim. All the difficulties arise because man is not free to act accordingly. His soul, which knows and is in the position of commanding his movement, is restricted and covered by his external thinking, energising and executing being, the mental, vital and physical parts with their ego and Gunas. Each of these parts considers itself to be the central being and follows its own ego. This discord is the main hindrance. Once the real authority is gained and the psychic being comes forward and rules the life of man, all the problems of life will be solved. For man will no more be selfish, ignorant and greedy, because he will know what he really needs and how he should act. Sri Aurobindo says of God's power: "This is illimitable in potency because it is God's capacity. It is only limited by his will which knows what is best for the world and for each of us in the world and apart from it."[2]

Nothing then can restrict man's movements any longer. Man becomes free. And that is the true freedom.

Thus true freedom is to be free from all those ignorant parts which oppose the divine Will. We are to be free to fulfil our innermost central will, the will to serve the Divine.

"All make tranquil, all make free.
Let my heart-beats measure the footsteps of God
As He comes from His timeless infinity
To build in their rapture His burning abode."[3]

[1] "The Four Austerities and the Four Liberations" in *On Education* (1966), p. 80.
[2] *The Yoga and Its Objects* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 414.
[3] Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 589.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

To attain this freedom a complete self-mastery and self-control over a strong body with a sensitive heart and a quiet balanced mind are absolute necessities. The psychic being can carry out the divine Will only through the mind, heart and body, for they are its energy-giving executing powers. Freedom can be obtained when all these parts are strong and obedient; the conquest will remain incomplete if a single part remains disobedient or disabled. It will not be the true freedom.

So none should be neglected. Each has to be developed from all sides, and has to be taught to understand its real aim. By proper regular habits and exercises the body can be made effective; by developing the senses and by educating the emotions the heart can be refined; by quietening and silencing the ordinary mental activities, a balanced quiet understanding can be obtained.

Thus the different parts will become ready to know that their real aim in life is a divine life on earth. Generally these parts are ignorant of their own functions, so each considers itself the central being and tries to control the development of the whole being by its imperfect knowledge. This is ego. There are different egos in different parts, and they again differ by their respective Gunas. We have the tamasic, the rajasic and the sattwic egos. The tamasic wants inaction, the rajasic argues for the value of action and hankers for its fruits, whereas the sattwic boasts of its own opinion and opposes the divine Will by its own personal ideas of altruism, justice and virtue. We have to teach these different parts of nature to obey the psychic being, the soul.

By continually rejecting the ideas of action or inaction suggested by our ego, by severing all the attachments for the fruits of our karma, by casting off all the conceptions of dualities and by listening only to one innermost voice we can make ourselves free from our bondage. We have to become *nispṛha, nirdvandva, nirahaṅkāra* to become truly free.

But it is a very difficult task. It is not possible for man to achieve this free consciousness unaided and unguided. Only the divine grace and help can bring man to his journey's end. In fact the realisation of integral freedom is so difficult that no one could envisage it before. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the first to have this truth-vision and truth-ideal. They have prepared the way and they are our guides and leaders in this adventure. The path they have made is radically new, for no ancient yoga or path can serve the purpose. Neither Raja Yoga nor Hatha Yoga is sufficient, even *trimārga* does not serve the purpose. They are ways for personal spiritual mukti; a higher and more complete way is needed. The yoga of Sri Aurobindo is the Purna Yoga or Integral Yoga, as he has named it. It is the way to full freedom or true freedom. It is not limited by one way or by one purpose; it includes all, it is a synthesis of all.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The principle of this yoga is, in knowledge, the realisation of one divine Brahman in every being and object, everywhere; and in action and in attitude, an absolute self-surrender.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

"Abandon all Dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve."[1]

To be free, what we need to do is to ask Him to make us free. If our aspiration is sincere, if we have an unflinching faith, He will surely grant us the freedom.

एता नो अग्ने सौभगा दिदीह्यपि क्रतुं सुचेतसं वतेम ।
विश्वा स्तोतृभ्यो गृणते च सन्तु यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः ॥

"O Fire, light up for us these happinesses; let us wake to an understanding of thy perfectly conscious will; let all be there for those who laud thee, for him who utters thee; may you protect us always with all kinds of weal."[2]

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

I. What is the Best Way of Making Humanity Progress?

"To concentrate most on one's own spiritual growth and experience is the first necessity of the sadhak — to be eager to help others draws away from the inner work. To grow in the spirit is the greatest help one can give to others, for then something flows out naturally to those around that helps them."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 151.)

*
**

[1] *Gita*, Ch. XVIII, Verse 66. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 536.

[2] *Rigveda*, VII, 4-10. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, (Cent. Ed., Vol. 11), p. 298.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"After all, the best way to make Humanity progress is to move on oneself, — that may sound individualistic or egoistic, but it isn't; it is only common sense."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, pp. 150-151.)

***

"The idea of usefulness to humanity is the old confusion due to second-hand ideas imported from the West...

"Yoga is directed towards God, not towards man. If a divine supramental consciousness and power can be brought down and established in the material world, that obviously would mean an immense change for the earth including humanity and its life. But the effect on humanity would only be one result of the change; it cannot be the object of the sadhana. The object of the sadhana can only be to live in the divine consciousness and to manifest it in life."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, pp. 148-149.)

II. What is True Freedom and How to Attain it?

"With us the freedom consists in freedom from the darkness, limitation, error, suffering, transience of the ignorant lower Nature, but also in a total surrender to the Divine. Free action is the action of the Divine in us and through us; no other action can be free."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 130.)

***

"When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant's groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulsions, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 53.)

The Mother's remarks on the above quotations:

"These quotations are simply *perfect* and nothing more can be said."

17.11.1965

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SEVENTH SEMINAR

20 February 1966

SUBJECT APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:

"How to serve the Truth?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO SERVE THE TRUTH?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The subject of this Seminar — *How to serve the Truth?* — is directly related to the Mother's New Year message this time: *Let us serve the Truth.* It has been specially selected for this occasion in order to focus our attention on its significance and to grasp its full implications.

This New Year message is a distinct pointer to the most important and urgent need of the present hour. The Truth to which the Mother refers is the supramental Truth which manifested in 1956 in the inner atmosphere of the earth, from where it is now insistently pressing to emerge in the external life of the world. At this moment the most important and imminent need is to make ourselves ready to receive and express that Truth in our life and actions — that is, to *serve* that Truth sincerely and whole-heartedly. To do this rightly it is very necessary to guard against our common human tendency to seize upon that Truth for utilising it for the satisfaction of our egoistic desires and interests. This is a gross error whch can only tend to deflect the Truth from its right course and lead to false or deformed consequences. This the supramental Truth will never permit. Let us recall Sri Aurobindo's warning:

"Avoid the imagination that the supramental life will be only a heightened satisfaction of the desires of the vital and the body; nothing can be a greater obstacle to the Truth in its descent than this hope of glorification of the animal in the human nature. Mind wants the supramental state to be a confirmation of its own cherished ideas and preconceptions; the vital wants it to be a glorification of its own desires; the physical wants it to be a rich prolongation of its own comforts and pleasures and habits. If it were to be that, it would be only an exaggerated and highly magnified consummation of the animal and the human nature, not a transition from the human into the Divine." [1]

It is in order to guard against this error that we are asked to change our normal ego-centric attitude into the God-centric. This ego-centric attitude is so deeply ingrained in the human nature that even in sadhana it persists obstinately for a very long time and is the cause of most of the dangers and deviations. As Sri Aurobindo points out: "Even in their sadhana the I is always there, — *my* sadhana, *my* progress, *my* everything. The remedy is to think constantly of the Divine, not of oneself, to work, to act, do sadhana for

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1509.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the Divine; not to consider how this or that affects *me* personally, not to claim anything, but to refer all to the Divine." [1]

If this is not done, the result will be that when the spiritual and supramental experiences come, the small human ego will seize hold of them and swell itself into a magnified ego, which is one of the greatest perils on the spiritual path. What the magnified ego means has been very vividly described by Sri Aurobindo: "When the limits of the ordinary mind and vital are broken, one feels a far vaster and more powerful consciousness and unlimited possibilities, but if one ties all that to the tail of one's own ego, then one becomes a thousand times more egoistic than the ordinary man. The greatness of the Divine becomes an excuse and a support for one's own greatness and the big I swells itself to fill not only the earth but the heavens. That magnification of the ego is a thing to be guarded against with a watchful care." [2]

The complete rejection of the ego is thus the indispensable necessity of receiving the supramental Truth and undergoing the supramental change. That is why Sri Aurobindo insists that "the first condition of the supramental change is to get rid of ego." [3] It is only when this is done that one can serve the Truth without any distortion or error.

*

It is relatively easy to recognise the impulses of our physical and vital nature as ego-centric, but in our higher mental nature there are tendencies which, from the point of view of human development, appear to us so impersonal, exalted and noble that we do not consider them ego-centric and, therefore, instead of rejecting them we expect that the advent of the supramental Truth will bring to us their highest fulfilment. This especially applies to our mental ideals, moral principles, religious beliefs and humanitarian aims. We have a deep conviction that the pursuit of these high aims and aspirations liberates us from the narrow bounds of the ego and opens us to a larger and greater impersonal truth. So we hope that in the divine life created by the supramental Truth in the world these aims and aspirations will find their perfect consummation.

But this is an error and unless we overcome it entirely we will not be able to serve the Truth in its purity and fullness. The supramental Truth is too vast and free to be confined within the narrow and rigid limits of our mental, moral and religious ideals. So long as we remain attached to them, the vast and limitless Truth of the Supermind, one in essence yet infinitely various in manifestation, cannot be received by us in our consciousness or expressed in our life and actions. Attachment to these limiting ideals can be as great or even a

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1372. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 1385.
[3] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 266.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

greater obstacle to the free action of Truth in us as the hindrance created by vital ego and desire and physical obscurity and inertia. If we aspire to serve the Truth in its wholeness and purity it is imperatively necessary that we must liberate ourselves from these narrow encumbrances and open ourselves entirely and exclusively to the illimitable vastness of the supramental Truth for its free and perfect action in and through us. In Sri Aurobindo's words: "If we are to be free in the Spirit, if we are to be subject only to the supreme Truth, we must discard the idea that our mental or moral laws are binding on the Infinite or that there can be anything sacrosanct, absolute or eternal even in the highest of our existing standards of conduct. To form higher and higher temporary standards as long as they are needed is to serve the Divine in his world march; to erect rigidly an absolute standard is to attempt the erection of a barrier against the eternal waters in their outflow." [1]

It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo insists: "The perfect supramental action will not follow any single principle or limited rule. It is not likely to satisfy the standard either of the individual egoist or of any organised group-mind. It will conform to the demand neither of the positive practical man of the world nor of the formal moralist nor of the patriot nor of the sentimental philanthropist nor of the idealising philosopher. It will proceed by a spontaneous outflowing from the summits in the totality of an illumined and uplifted being, will and knowledge and not by the selected, calculated and standardised action which is all that the intellectual reason or ethical will can achieve. Its sole aim will be the expression of the divine in us and the keeping together of the world and its progress towards the Manifestation that is to be. This even will not be so much an aim and purpose as a spontaneous law of the being and an intuitive determination of the action by the Light of the divine Truth and its automatic influence." [2]

This then is the answer to the question we have for this Seminar. The only way to serve the Truth is to be free of all our human standards and principles and to submit totally and exclusively to the Will of the Truth alone and let it act freely and spontaneously in and through us. We have to be free not only of the blinding compulsions of our lower nature but also of all the mental, moral and religious ideals of our higher nature to which we attach so great a value and even consider as sacred and inviolable. We have to break all these bonds if we are to be the perfect servants of Truth. If we do not do so then instead of ourselves serving the Truth we shall only try to make the Truth our servant. But the supramental Truth will not allow itself to be deviated in this manner because it is uncompromising in its insistence on serving the Divine Will only and no other.

We may therefore say that to serve the Truth we must obey uncondi-

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 180.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 194-95.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tionally the one Divine Will alone in all our being and life. That can only be done by a total self-surrender to the Supreme Lord who is the Master of Truth and of all our being and life. Love is the key to perfect surrender. Therefore, to love the Lord and obey His Will in all sincerity is the most perfect way to serve the Truth.

SPEECH BY BRAJKISHORE SINGH

When we set before us this question, reason most naturally asks what this Truth is that we are to serve. And in the whole realm of thought perhaps there is no more abstract notion than the notion of Truth. Yet we cannot afford to fall off to rest because of this difficulty; for as the Mother says, "In the world, as it actually is, the goal of life is not to secure personal happiness, but to awaken the individual progressively towards the truth-consciousness." [1] It is not so much for its own sake that we want to know what Truth is, but for the sake of living it out. In fact, there is no such thing as knowing the Truth, as far as we are concerned. For, "It is only, when you are no longer human, that you *know*." [2] Knowledge for us is only a secondary aspect of life, being is first. In Sri Aurobindo's words: "To be or become something, to bring something into being is the whole labour of the force of Nature; to know, feel, do are subordinate energies that have a value because they help the being in its partial self-realisation to express what it is and help it too in its urge to express the still more not yet realised that it has to be." [3]

"There is a state, a state essentially pragmatic, spiritually pragmatic where of all human futilities, the most futile is metaphysics." [4]

Hence the Truth we are seeking after is the truth of being, the dynamic truth, the dynamic Will of the Divine, in the universe and in the individual. But how are we to know what the Divine wants of us? It is possible to know this Will only if we have built an inner relation with the Divine. But even before this relation is established, when at every moment we can perceive the guiding finger, we are never left out in a total darkness. The knowledge for the right action is always given. In fact when we fail to serve the Truth, it is rarely for the lack of knowledge. It is most often a failure of the will that is not strong enough to brush aside inferior wills or personal satisfactions that

[1] *On Education* (1952), p. 28.
[2] The Mother, *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Aug. 1965, p. 53.
[3] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1022.
[4] *Bulletin*, August 1965, p. 55.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

infiltrate. And when infiltrating desires cloud the mind, we fail to hear even the most convincing known Voice, or to see the written word.

What is required is total surrender to the Highest and obedience to the Command. While we desire to reign in knowledge, Truth seeking to materialise begs hopelessly for serving hands.

We are all assigned a frame of work which offers ample opportunity to serve the Will. But our work is only a frame, a symbol. Our wider work is the whole of life, with all our thought and feeling. And we are to grow gradually into harmony with the Will in life itself. That is our true status. And service in that status can bring no fatigue. Fatigue belongs to the effort of climbing back to it, or, even more often perhaps, to the ego struggling to come out of it...

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The Mother's message this year, like others of the preceding years, is cryptic and touches at once the need of the hour. It forms a chain in the series of messages given by Her, all having a direct bearing on the amazing phenomenon that is at present being manifested in the earth-consciousness. We cannot therefore take this message in isolation. We need a wider perspective for a fuller comprehension.

This Truth that the Mother speaks of had its initial manifestation in 1956. And the messages that followed showed the path of its manifestation together with its inevitable results. Subtly, inperceptibly that new light grew, took deeper root in the earth-consciousness and became slowly an omnipuissant power of new creation. But together with its descent and manifestation the Darkness grew in apparently the same proportions. Hence the Mother called on us to prepare ourselves to receive it, refusing and rejecting the opposing forces of Darkness. Till now this Light was hovering above us. But now it is with us, because the Mother has hailed its advent in the last year's message. Now it is a permanent part of earth-consciousness, in spite of the resistance of the opposing forces. Her message this year implies its sovereignty over us. It also implies the destiny of the earth and humanity, calling them to surrender to its supreme Will. It indicates also the right way we must take to receive it — not by a strenuous seizure but by a self-giving as a glad, true and candid instrument.

What is this Truth for which the Mother and the Master have toiled so indefatigably for over half a century? It is not the truth of the gods, nor the truth of religions, nor the truth of the escapist Sannyasin. It is not a way of life merely, or a faith, or a credo, or even a most deep-rooted belief, concept,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ideal or imagination of humanity. It is the Sun whose veiled face the Vedic Rishis had glimpsed but could not touch or possess. It was for the Mother and the Master to have called it down by their unimaginable sacrifices, feats no human being could perform or endure. All of their workings are veiled and beyond our limited understanding. But the fact the Truth is here implies a great and colossal endeavour. This Truth is the Truth of Supermind which alone can effect the radical change of human nature and human conditions. This Truth is the aim of the Mother and the Master and all their actions were seen, judged and carried out keeping this great reality as the ultimate ideal.

How are we to serve this Truth, we who are bound by ignorance, limited by incapacities, and chained by the error of fate and change? This service is not in an outer act, nor in a way of becoming, nor a way of thought. The service lies in our willingness to change radically and entirely. We must be able to respond to its Light, its Consciousness, its supreme Power. We must be able to hold it, channelise it, so that it could become an effective force for our total transfiguration. We must be willing to go beyond our narrow mentality, our habits, our passions, our desires, our small cravings: these are the conditions of the service. For if we did not change our nature, we could not serve it effectively. So, this Light must be at the base and end of all our quest and becoming. Our efforts cannot further our goal, if we have not gone beyond our limitations. For our nature is too stubborn to be transformed by any other lesser agency; Supermind alone possesses the key to this transformation. Thus we start with this power as our aid, our support and conclude with it as our supreme goal.

The most visible way of serving this Truth is to grow aware of it working amongst us, not as a mere intangible light but as something whose touch is flame, whose pressure is joy, whose influence is an everlasting bliss. This would mean that we must go beyond the looming shadow of materialism, of appearances and of human limitations both in act and thought. We must come to recognise our being as a limited instrument, our nature as an yet imperfect jumble of actions and reactions, desires and hungers, cravings and lusts. In other words, we must learn to station ourselves not on our ego, but on our soul and a higher spiritual entity.

Then we must slowly open ourselves to this Light, but not with impatience try to seize it. On the contrary we must allow it to come down into the silent *ādhāra* according to its will, according to the condition and receptivity of our nature. We must always be conscious of its action in our acts, speech and thought; we must become conscious that it is this Power that is working in us and not our little nature. Lastly, we must not imagine that the supramental Truth is a distant and unapproachable reality. For the supramental Truth is the Truth of the Mother and of Sri Aurobindo and once it has taken a firm root in this earth-consciousness as a result of their endeavour,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

their true work will have an assured beginning and a progressive fulfilment. If we have faith in them, we shall have faith in the Supermind: they are veritable representatives and usherers of this Gnostic Reality on earth and in the life of humanity.

But this does not mean that a mere passive recognition of the Truth is enough. What we need is a living faith born in the soul, a living sincerity in all parts of our being, a total and all-embracing plasticity. We cannot be supramentalised all at once. It will take a very long time, perhaps several births. But the difficuty of the task must not discourage us. For our joyous faith and the acceptance of this task, in spite of the enormous difficulty, would be themselves a service to this Truth. We must not be discouraged by apparent failings within and without. This rejection of doubt and calculating mentality would be another service. We are now at the gates of the Unknown. We cannot by our limited vision foresee what course would be taken by this Light, what would be its mode of manifestation and expression. But we must have courage to abandon the moorings of our physical mind, our petty reason and give ourselves unreservedly to this great Power. Here is an adventure worthy of a lifetime, rather of countless lives to come. Here is the path of the Unexpected, the Undreamt, the Unseizable.

Appearances may seem grim and foreboding. That is why the Mother is asking us to side with the Truth, to come under its direct control. This gloom and the seeming unpredictableness of the conditions are in themselves sufficient reasons to cling to the Truth and serve it sincerely. This would open out a new way for us, for all those who have shared the adventure and the cross. For those who have risked all would gain all. But those who are calculating, who sit on the shore and waste their time in futile computations and confabulations instead of diving in and coming directly under the sway of the new Power, would not only lose an unprecedented opportunity but perhaps would not even know what they have lost. Let this be not our fate. Surely it was not for such meaningless existence we were born!

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

The subject of this Seminar is a necessary corollary to the Mother's New Year's message, "Let us serve the Truth", which naturally leads to the query as to what Truth is and how to serve It.

Needless to say that Truth is one, and that the Divine is the only Truth, though the ways and lines of its manifestation are many. One can serve the Truth in the field of Spirituality as well as in the field of Science and of Arts, as also in their endless divisions, sub-divisions and branches. And through

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

all these we shall invariably arrive at the same source.

One can serve the Truth by one's sincere will and endeavour to grow more and more in consciousness and knowledge; one can serve It by one's deep devotion and love for the Divine, one can as well serve the Truth by offering one's material wealth and money to the Divine, to the cause of the Truth. In fact, every event and circumstance in life can be made an occasion to serve the Truth, to realise and express the Truth. "It is in each and every moment of the daily life that the Truth must be found and practised,"[1] observes the Mother.

In order to serve the Truth we must try to be the faithful and docile servants and instruments of the Divine for the victorious manifestation of the Truth in every strand of our terrestrial existence. For this it is necessary that we should gradually grow conscious of the Divine's Will in us and, in a sincere collaboration, silently open ourselves to it so that the Light and Power of the Divine Truth may work unhindered in and through us. We must at the same time, bear in mind this warning of the Mother: "Never mistake your desires for the Truth, nor believe that your personal will is the Lord's Will."[2]

And for this it is essential for us to develop the capacity to discriminate between what is Truth and what is falsehood, between the divine and the undivine. Accordingly we should try to be conscious of the forces which are at work behind the surface. As a general rule, all that helps to elevate our consciousness and widen our outlook, all that helps to bring us closer to the Divine — to its light and height, peace and presence, harmony and beauty. — is moved by the impulses of Truth; in the same way, all that lowers our consciousness and arrests our inner progress and draws us away from the Divine towards ignorance and obscurity springs direct from Falsehood. The Mother says, "Those who wish to help the Light of Truth to prevail over the forces of darkness and falsehood, can do so by carefully observing the initiating impulses of their movements and actions, and discriminating between those that come from the Truth and those that come from the falsehood, in order to obey the first and to refuse or reject the others."[3]

One must be careful not to act under an impulse or decide anything in haste, because then one can never be sure whether one is actually serving the Truth or the falsehood. We should make it a point of habit to step back and reflect awhile before precipitating ourselves into any action or decision or speech whatsoever. "If we allow a falsehood, however small, to express itself through our mouth or our pen, how can we hope to become perfect messengers of Truth? A perfect servant of Truth should abstain even from the slightest inexactitude, exaggeration or deformation,"[4] remarks the Mother.

[1] *White Roses* (1973), p. 34.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 122. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 103.
[4] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 222.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

One important point. We should try to be in a state of constant goodwill and benevolence for all, and compassion and kindness for all the lower creatures including the animals, just as the Divine Himself is All Love and All Compassion for all humanity and for all creation. In fact, this is automatically implied in the service of the Truth when we consider it from its integral standpoint.

In the individual, it is the soul or the psychic being that represents the Divine or the secret Truth. "It is the very nature of the soul or the psychic being to turn towards the Divine Truth as the sunflower to the sun; it accepts and clings to all that is divine or progressing towards divinity and draws back from all that is a perversion or a denial of it, from all that is false and undivine," [1] writes Sri Aurobindo. And in different individuals the psychic being is at a different stage of development; and through each one the soul seeks to realise something new and express itself in a different mode and line. And hence each one of us has his or her own truth of being.

We should go deep within ourselves, and in a calm concentration try to be conscious of this truth of our being, to know what it is exactly which our soul seeks to realise. To express this inmost truth of our being in all our works and activities, our thoughts and speech, emotions and sensations, rejecting at every instant all that contradicts this truth of our being is, in fact, to be at the service of the Truth. Thus says the Mother, "Whatever you do, whatever your occupation and activity, the will to find the truth of your being and to unite with it must always be living, always present behind all that you do, all that you experience, all that you think." [2]

"The truth we seek," says the Mother, "is made of four major aspects: Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty." [3] The psychic serves as an instrument of true and Divine Love; the mind in the same way should try to serve as an instrument for expressing the true Knowledge; the vital likewise should be instrumental in manifesting the Power and strength of the Spirit, whereas the physical should serve in expressing a harmonious Beauty of the secret divinity.

One point to which we must be particularly attentive if we wish to serve the Truth genuinely is that in any field of life, intellectual or artistic or cultural, our bent or inclination as also our drive should be to attain a perfection, a greater and fuller perfection rather than a temporary success somehow or other; the latter is more in the nature of a superficial show-off than a true achievement. "The truth of the being is never static," says the Mother, "it is a continual unfolding of a growing, a more and more global and comprehensive perfection." [4] Our aim is truth in its perfection and not its superficial appearance.

And for this, we shall have to make deliberate efforts to exceed the

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 144.
[2] *On Education* (1952), p. 4. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 10. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

narrow limits of our ego-consciousness. Our ego is constituted of all sorts of belligerent elements perpetually at war with one another. The ego personality is a field of complete chaos and confusion, and marked with utter disharmony and division, whereas Truth is a harmonious whole marked with the qualities of spontaneous and unalloyed purity and joy, knowledge and beauty, goodness and humility which are essentially divine.

So we should consciously try to translate these divine qualities in all our ways and movements, persistently rejecting all that is undivine and false, if we aspire to be the sincere servants of the Truth. "The laying bare of each falsehood is in itself a victory — each acknowledgement of error is the demolition of one of the lords of Darkness," [1] announces the Mother.

And, at the same time, we should strive to realise the inner harmony and unity, first in all the different parts of our own being and nature by gradually bringing our psychic personality in front, and then experience the same universally with all other beings and, through them all, perceive a oneness with the Divine Himself. Thus the Truth can be served in all its aspects — individual, cosmic and transcendental. To achieve this Herculean task what is needed is to undergo a total transformation, a complete reversal of consciousness.

This is certainly not an easy task. We shall have to prepare ourselves in all sincerity for this unique transformation down to the most physical. Perfect purity should be established in all the different parts of our being. Sincerity is, in fact, our base. Only on the solid foundation of a perfect sincerity can the Truth be served.

And, if we are keen on serving the Truth, it is well understood that we have genuine aspiration for this; because in all matters of serious undertaking, aspiration marks the beginning.

Now, it is extremely difficult to bring about a cohesion and unanimity in the various ill-assorted members of our being. Even though some parts may be aspiring for the Light and the Force representing the Truth, there are other parts, mainly in the sphere of the vital, which are arrogant and rebellious by nature. We must sincerely and with perseverance strive to train and educate our vital so as to make it sober and refined, and grow in wideness and power. In the process, we shall meet with innumerable obstacles and barriers of all kinds thwarting our progress. And to cross through them, we must equip ourselves with a stern determination and an indomitable courage. "With the collaboration of the vital no realisation seems impossible, no transformation impracticable," [2] says the Mother.

Moreover, it is indispensable to have a faith, spontaneous and unwavering, in the Divine, in the secret guidance of the Mother whether outwardly we are conscious of it or not. There must be no room for any doubt or disbelief or

[1] *Words of the Mother*, Third Series (1951), p. 31. [2] *On Education* (1952), p. 7.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

depression to creep in. This firm faith which is inherent in the soul is, in fact, our guide.

One factor to which we must be awake, and which can by no means be evaded if we wish to serve sincerely the Truth is that we shall have to endeavour to exterminate totally all animality which has its roots struck deep in our subconscience. The subconscience must be cleared of all its quagmire that has accumulated in the course of our past experience as well as by way of heredity. This is an extremely difficult and tardy process. We must arm ourselves with an obstinate resolution coupled with an indefatigable patience. We should try our level best, keeping ourselves open to the Mother's Light and Power. Her Grace alone can effectuate the miracle and deliver us out of the crude animality.

It is not possible by one's personal effort alone to walk along the path to serve the Truth. A loving and trustful self-giving to the Mother is essential. In a joyous openness to Her Force and Light and Consciousness we should invoke Her Grace and Love which alone can lead us to the road to Truth and effectuate the much needed transformation. "With the Divine's Love is the power of transformation.... Not only into man but into all the atoms of Matter has it infused itself in order to bring the world back to the original Truth." [1] We should constantly try to be in a state of quiet receptivity so that the Truth may manifest itself freely and spontaneously in and through us.

And still, all this is by way of preparation only, to make ourselves ready to serve the Truth. Of course, in the present state of our consciousness, a sincere preparation also amounts to serving the Truth.

But in order to rightly serve the Truth in all purity and perfection, it is necessary to rise to the level of the Truth. Remaining at a lower level of consciousness, we cannot possibly think of serving the Truth at its own divine altitude. At best, we can be sincere aspirants, but not qualified for the service of the Truth in its unbounded and supramental sovereignty. We must be totally liberated from the clutches of ignorance and inconscience and dark obscurities, and emerge into the plenary light and splendour of the Spirit. It is only when we exceed altogether our narrow ego-sense and totally shake off all animality from our nature and are imbued with the innate divinity, that we are truly eligible for the service of the Truth and can serve it at our true height and depth and wideness of being and consciousness.

On the whole earth, this Ashram of ours is perhaps the best place where one can profitably serve the Truth, if one truly so aspires. The world, in general, is so full of corruption and vilest pretensions that as yet it is only falsehood that thrives there. "But Truth would still be Truth if it had not even a single follower. The average man is drawn towards those who make great pretensions; he does not go where Truth is quietly manifesting." [3]

[1] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 188. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

And it is our sacred privilege to be here in the Ashram with the purpose of serving the Truth and preparing ourselves to be the fit instruments and vehicles for the manifestation of Truth, under the direct care and guidance of Divine Mother herself. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, by their relentless effort and Divine Power, hastened the supramental descent and manifestation on earth. And now, with the Light and Power of the Truth-Consciousness constantly at work in the earth nature, the work of transformation has been made much easier, and the moment is most opportune for those who wish to dedicate themselves sincerely for the cause of the Truth, so that the Truth may be victorious and the reign of Truth and Light and Harmony be firmly established here and now, and the Falsehood with its train of ignorance and suffering and misery be eradicated for ever from the face of the earth.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं

"It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood," [1] declared the Rishis of the Upanishads. "Nothing, not even the darkest falsehood can stop the ultimate triumph of Truth," [2] affirms the Mother.

With the full flowering and manifestation of the supramental Truth-Consciousness as a realising power, the self-government of Truth will be securely founded, and this earth will be inhabited by a superior race, the race of supermen who will be the perfect servants and instruments, messengers and standard-bearers of the Divine Truth. And till that moment arrives let us steadfastly "Cling to Truth".

Let our constant prayer rise in a flaming aspiration to the Divine, in the Mother's own words: "Lord, give us the strength to reject falsehood and emerge in Thy truth, pure and worthy of Thy Victory."[3]

SPEECH BY SRIJIT BHATTACHARYA

I do not propose to deliver a scholarly lecture giving an abstruse philosophical exposition but to give a simple straightforward presentation of a few ideas that passed through my mind as I pondered over the subject which the Mother has chosen for this Seminar. For, I believe that to approach a problem in a straightforward direct manner takes us more easily and swiftly to the heart of its truth than any amount of abstract thought-spinning and word-spinning around it.

[1] *Mundaka Upanishad*, Ch. III, I-6. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 282.

[2] *White Roses* (1973), p. 98. [3] The Mother's New Year's Message for 1943.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Everybody, it seems, utters the word 'Truth', even the persons who have the least understanding of it. But what does it mean? Usually when we speak of Truth we assume that it is something connected with our earthly existence and human life, but I believe that Truth in its essence is something which is higher, deeper and more powerful than the creation itself. It is something infinite and eternal, something which both transcends and contains the past, present and future. It is in its highest sense nothing but the Supreme Reality or God who has not only created the world but at every moment guides and governs it. Generations flux and reflux, time and space change, but Truth is ever living, permanent, stable and unaltered. It is not evident on the surface but is the hidden light secret behind our ignorant thoughts, feelings and actions.

This Truth, which is the source of all our aspirations and ideals, has unfortunately become a strange guest to humanity today. Though it pervades all the spheres and movements of our life, the ignorant mind of modern man fails to appreciate its real value and consequently becomes incapable of receiving and containing its presence. The human mentality today is to worship happiness for happiness' sake, and not Truth for Truth's sake, which, in fact, is the only source of all enduring happiness and delight in life. This has happened because the mind of modern man has become utterly materialistic and rationalistic and his very nature has turned so insincere, selfish and obscure that it has lost all the qualities needed to realise the Truth, love the Truth and serve the Truth. Mankind in general today is in a most chaotic and disastrous condition, and unless and until it becomes conscious in the depths of its heart of the real aim and value of its existence, which is of course, to know the Truth, to live in the Truth and to identify itself with the Truth, it will never be able to emerge from the catacombs of Ignorance and falsehood. The first and foremost step to serve the Truth is, however, to know the Truth; and sincerity, simplicity and an ardent aspiration, I believe, are the three indispensable guides needed in this direction. Sincerity, which the Mother defines as the 'key of the divine doors', must be present in all the three instruments of our life, i.e., physical, mental and vital. Our thoughts, feelings, sensations and actions should express nothing but perfect sincerity. It is relatively easy for these instruments to show sincerity in their outward actions, but to be sincere in their inner intention is rather a difficult task to accomplish, and the most difficult is to control the vital being which is the seat of desires, passions and violent impulses and has an inherent tendency to roam about like a fickle-minded child.

Secondly, when the question of serving the Truth arises, a vivid image of a sincere worker serving his master comes to the forefront, who in order to obey his superior carries out his will with all his head and heart. But Truth is not generally an obvious fact of life, but a secret essence. So to receive the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

impulsion of Truth and obey it depends entirely on the inner discernment of the man who is on the way to serve the Truth. In this position, if the man has a simple and straightforward mind, with a pure conscience, then he will not be misled in his discernment. The third and final quality needed is, of course, an ardent aspiration, the absence of which would make meaningless and futile all his attempts in this direction. But on the contrary, if the traveller is an aspirant, determined and persistent, he is bound to be victorious in his journey towards the Truth. When these qualities are well-developed in a man, he is fully ready to serve the Truth. While serving the Truth he should think of the Truth and *Truth alone*, rejecting all that is false, inexact, exaggerated and deformed. Whatever may be the outer circumstances, he should deal with the Truth scrupulously and love it for its own sake. Truth neither hides nor proclaims itself, but when such a seeker welcomes it, it manifests within him, making him a perfect image of 'सत्यम् शिवम् सुन्दरम्'[1].

SPEECH BY TARUN BANERJI

Before we can serve the Truth with any consequence we must have some tangible contact with it by our psychological faculties. For, our means of attaining and serving the Truth become effective in proportion to our clear psychological perception of it. But when we seek for an answer to the question, "What is the Truth?" what we get is more often than not either ponderous polysyllables like "Consciousness", "Eternal", "Infinite", etc., or a disheartening blank. For indeed the Truth is incomprehensible to the mind, much less approachable by it. Either it seems to be a philosophical speculation and postulate or a cold and intangible abstraction — particularly to those parts of our being which need some concreteness as a prerequisite for serving anything with an effective dynamism. How then to serve the Truth?

To reduce this embarrassment the Mother says: "However, to help at the beginning, one can take as a guiding rule that all that brings with it or creates peace, faith, joy, harmony, wideness, unity and ascending growth comes from the Truth; while all that carries with it restlessness, doubt, scepticism, sorrow, discord, selfish narrowness, inertia, discouragement and despair comes straight from the falsehood."[2]

No doubt the Grace to stand face to face with the Truth is given only to a few, but no doubt either that the Grace to experience these agents of the Truth, *viz.*, "peace, faith, joy..." is given to all without exception. And that is enough for our present purpose. For, the service of the Truth is automa-

[1] *Satyam, Śivam, Sundaram.* The True, the Good, the Beautiful.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1965, p. 89.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tically carried out if, on the one hand, we can follow these agents of the Truth and, on the other, stand adamant against the intervention of the agents of the falsehood, *viz.*, "restlessness, doubt, scepticism...." The very nature and purpose of the Truth is to manifest and embrace the whole earth with its power and light till all becomes Truth-conscious. And how best can we serve the Truth if not by letting its agents prepare in us the ground to make the Truth's full play possible, and by dispelling the falsehood and its sickening representatives which try to oppose the Truth's great endeavour?

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"The only creation for which there is any place here is the supramental, the bringing of the divine Truth down on the earth, not only into the mind and vital but into the body and into Matter. Our object is not to remove all 'limitations' on the expansion of the ego or to give a free field and make unlimited room for the fulfilment of the ideas of the human mind or the desires of the ego-centred life-force. None of us are here to 'do as we like', or to create a world in which we shall at last be able to do as we like; we are here to do what the Divine wills and to create a world in which the Divine Will can manifest its truth no longer deformed by human ignorance or perverted and mistranslated by vital desire. The work which the sadhak of the supramental yoga has to do is not his own work for which he can lay down his own conditions, but the work of the Divine which he has to do according to the conditions laid down by the Divine. Our yoga is not for our own sake but for the sake of the Divine. It is not our own personal manifestation that we are to seek, the manifestation of the individual ego freed from all bounds and from all bonds, but the manifestation of the Divine. Of that manifestation our own spiritual liberation, perfection, fullness is to be a result and a part, but not in any egoistic sense or for any ego-centred or self-seeking purpose. This liberation, perfection, fullness too must not be pursued for our own sake, but for the sake of the Divine."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1313-14.)

The Mother's remarks on the above quotation:

"It is such a perfect explanation that it will be printed in the next *Bulletin* after the text of the new year message. So I keep the text for translation."

7.1.1966

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

EIGHTH SEMINAR

14 August 1966

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"What is the destiny of Man?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS THE DESTINY OF MAN?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

At the beginning of this Seminar, on behalf of the New Age Association, I warmly welcome all who have come to attend it. I especially welcome the group of American university students who have come here under the scheme of the Experiment in International Living. Since our Centre of Education is an international centre, having as one of its chief aims the cultivation of the true spirit of international unity, we hope that the visiting students will find themselves here in a congenial atmosphere and will have enough opportunities to make their experiment fruitful.

The subject we have for this Seminar — *What is the destiny of Man?* — has itself a distinct bearing on international unity, in the sense that whatever may be our conception of human destiny, it is the common destiny of all mankind. To whatever race or religion or nation or culture we may belong, as human beings we all have the same common human nature and in our progressive endeavours we are all jointly marching forward to a common goal. This is the basic truth of human unity on which we have to insist if we wish to give the right orientation to our consideration of the problem of human destiny. This will become quite evident if I read a passage from Sri Aurobindo's message to America given on the 15th August 1949:

"It has been customary to dwell on the division and difference between these two sections of the human family and even oppose them to each other; but, for myself I would rather be disposed to dwell on oneness and unity than on division and difference. East and West have the same human nature, a common human destiny, the same aspiration after a greater perfection, the same seeking after something higher than itself, something towards which inwardly and even outwardly we move. There has been a tendency in some minds to dwell on the spirituality or mysticism of the East and the materialism of the West; but the West has had no less than the East its spiritual seekings and, though not in such profusion, its saints and sages and mystics, the East has had its materialistic tendencies, its material splendours, its similar or identical dealings with life and Matter and the world in which we live. East and West have always met and mixed more or less closely, they have powerfully influenced each other and at the present day are under an increasing compulsion of Nature and Fate to do so more than ever before.

"There is a common hope, a common destiny, both spiritual and material, for which both are needed as co-workers. It is no longer towards division and

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

difference that we should turn our minds, but on unity, union, even oneness necessary for the pursuit and realisation of a common ideal, the destined goal, the fulfilment towards which Nature in her beginning obscurely set out and must in an increasing light of knowledge replacing her first ignorance constantly persevere."[1]

The Mother herself said the same thing in a brief message which she gave for the same occasion:

"Stop thinking that you are of the Wes tand others of the East. All human beings are of the same divine origin and meant to manifest upon earth the unity of this origin."

*

To say that all human beings have the same common destiny is, however, not enough to answer the question that we have before us, for we have further to consider: What is that destiny? There can be different views on this problem depending upon our conception of man's nature and its future potentialities and his place in the universe. The apparently contradictory views of the East and the West on these issues and their true reconciliation have been explained by Sri Aurobindo in his message to America to which I have already referred, and I think it best to read it to you in his own words:

"But what shall be that ideal and that goal? That depends on our conception of the realities of life and the supreme Reality.

"Here we have to take into account that there has been, not any absolute difference but an increasing divergence between the tendencies of the East and the West. The highest truth is the truth of the Spirit; a Spirit supreme above the world and yet immanent in the world and in all that exists, sustaining and leading all towards whatever is the aim and goal and the fulfilment of Nature since her obscure inconscient beginnings through the growth of consciousness is the one aspect of existence which gives a clue to the secret of our being and a meaning to the world. The East has always and increasingly put the highest emphasis on the supreme truth of the Spirit; it has, even in its extreme philosophies, put the world away as an illusion and regarded the Spirit as the sole reality. The West has concentrated more and more increasingly on the world, on the dealings of mind and life with our material existence, on our mastery over it, on the perfection of mind and life and some fulfilment of the human being here: latterly this has gone so far as the denial of the Spirit and even the enthronement of Matter as the sole reality. Spiritual

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 413-14.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

perfection as the sole ideal on one side, on the other, the perfectibility of the race, the perfect society, a perfect development of the human mind and life and man's material existence have become the largest dream of the future. Yet both are truths and can be regarded as part of the intention of the Spirit in world-nature; they are not incompatible with each other: rather their divergence has to be healed and both have to be included and reconciled in our view of the future.

"The Science of the West has discovered evolution as the secret of life and its process in this material world; but it has laid more stress on the growth of form and species than on the growth of consciousness: even, consciousness has been regarded as an incident and not the whole secret of the meaning of the evolution. An evolution has been admitted by certain minds in the East, certain philosophies and Scriptures, but there its sense has been the growth of the soul through developing or successive forms and many lives of the individual to its own highest reality. For if there is a conscious being in the form, that being can hardly be a temporary phenomenon of consciousness; it must be a soul fulfilling itself and this fulfilment can only take place if there is a return of the soul to earth in many successive lives, in many successive bodies.

"The process of evolution has been the development from and in inconscient Matter of a subconscient and then a conscious Life, of conscious mind first in animal life and then fully in conscious and thinking man, the highest present achievement of evolutionary Nature. The achievement of mental being is at present her highest and tends to be regarded as her final work; but it is possible to conceive a still further step of the evolution: Nature may have in view beyond the imperfect mind of man a consciousness that passes out of the mind's ignorance and possesses truth as its inherent right and nature. There is a Truth-Consciousness as it is called in the Veda, a Supermind, as I have termed it, possessing Knowledge, not having to seek after it and constantly miss it. In one of the Upanishads a being of knowledge is stated to be the next step above the mental being; into that the soul has to rise and through it to attain the perfect bliss of spiritual existence. If that could be achieved as the next evolutionary step of Nature here, then she would be fulfilled and we could conceive of the perfection of life even here, its attainment of a full spiritual living even in this body or it may be in a perfected body. We could even speak of a divine life on earth; our human dream of perfectibility would be accomplished and at the same time the aspiration to a heaven on earth common to several religions and spiritual seers and thinkers.

"The ascent of the human soul to the supreme Spirit is that soul's highest aim and necessity, for that is the supreme reality; but there can be too the descent of the Spirit and its powers into the world and that would justify the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

existence of the material world also, give a meaning, a divine purpose to the creation and solve its riddle. East and West could be reconciled in the pursuit of the highest and largest ideal, Spirit embrace Matter and Matter find its own true reality and the hidden Reality in all things in the Spirit."[1]

You will see from what I have read that Sri Aurobindo's view of human destiny is based upon his theory of spiritual evolution, which is itself derived from his spiritual vision of the most fundamental truths of existence. It points to the highest summit that man has to scale in his evolutionary development and which is the ultimate aim of his perfection.

*

If we admit this view of human destiny then it is apparent that yoga is nothing else but a conscious and systematic endeavour to realise that destiny at its highest level. The majority of men the world over are hardly even aware of this destiny or, even if vaguely aware, are unwilling to make the necessary effort to realise it. They live on somehow, anyhow, from day to day and give hardly a serious thought as to what is their life's ultimate aim. A yogi is one who has become conscious of that aim and seeks to realise it swiftly by a systematic practice. It is necessary to make this clear because people in the West very often think of yoga in terms of some unfamiliar bodily postures and breathing practices. But these things, though they are helpful as part of an external process of certain schools of yoga, have no intrinsic relation to its essential aim, which is simply the realisation of the highest spiritual goal of human life by a systematic and intensive effort.

*

Here it may be asked: What about the general mass of men who are not conscious of their spiritual destiny and who do not make any endeavour to realise it?

The answer will depend upon our conception of man's place in the terrestrial evolution and of the Power that guides and governs it. Surely man himself is not that governing Power nor is the whole course of evolution worked out through him. Evolution on earth began long before man's emergence in it, and it has worked itself out through many species before he became its dominating figure. The long drama of evolution has been played out on the earth's stage through many scenes by many varieties of players before the human scene was enacted with man in the principal role. Whether, like other players before him, he will pass away after playing out his appointed

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 414-16.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

role in the still unfinished drama of evolution and will be replaced by a new superior being, or whether he will convert himself into a superior being by some process of self-transfiguration and continue to play new roles in the new scenes that are still to be unfolded in future — that is the crucial issue on which man's evolutionary destiny hangs. The outcome of this issue depends practically on how the present man avails himself of the choice that is offered to him by evolutionary Nature. As Sri Aurobindo puts it:

"At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny."[1]

"Either man must fulfil himself by satisfying the Divine within him or he must produce out of himself a new and greater being who will be more capable of satisfying it. He must either himself become a divine humanity or give place to Superman."[2]

The final decision however rests in the hands of the Master of Evolution who is the ultimate determinant of all things. Perhaps He will not make an exclusive choice of only one of the alternatives but will allow both the alternatives to have their full play. In any case, the issue will be *settled* definitevely by Him. On the eve of His birthday let us remember Him with a confident heart and wait on His Will which, in spite of our blindnesses and blunders, always leads us to our supreme good.

SPEECH BY MANOJ DASGUPTA

Whenever I am asked to speak at a conference such as this one, in my guilty conscience rings these words of the Mother: "To speak usefully for ten minutes, you should remain silent for ten days."[3] The silence the Mother speaks of here is the inner quietude.

But then if we were to adhere strictly to this dictum of the Mother, I am afraid we would hardly find a speaker for all our conferences. And that would be an agonising situation. For after all what distinguishes us, human beings, from the animals is precisely this power of articulate speech. And by Jove, we know how to make a jolly good use of it! So let's talk — that is, let me talk. Of course I am not here to speak on ships and shoes and sealing

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1053.
[2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 209.
[3] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 102.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

wax and cabbages and kings, but on a specific subject: "What is the destiny of man?"

Well, what is the destiny of man? Frankly speaking, I do not know. Not to speak of man in general, I do not know even the destiny of the man I am most interested in, namely myself. Each second I am ignorant of what is going to happen to me in the next second. I dare say, so are you. So is the premier of Britain, Mr. Wilson — or else he would have ducked in time to avoid the stink-bomb hurled at him in one of his election campaigns. (I only hope no such thing happens to me here.) Yet, Mr. Wilson and all the politicians and all the statesmen and all the intellectuals and all of us big and small are eating our heads away worrying over such issues as the future of Vietnam, the possibility of a third world-war, the destiny of mankind, etc., etc., — we who are ignorant of the next second!

The question therefore arises: Is it worthwhile to ask such a question? Is it at all possible for us here to know our destiny? —

> "Here where our half-lit ignorance skirts the gulfs
> On the dumb bosom of the ambiguous earth,
> Here where one knows not even the step in front
> And Truth has her throne on the shadowy back of doubt."[1]

Well, if we accept the view that:

> "This world was not built with random bricks of chance,
> A blind god is not destiny's architect;
> A conscious power has drawn the plan of life,
> There is a meaning in each curve and line"[2] —

then we must admit the possibility of becoming conscious of this Plan — to know our destiny. Of course we should not expect it to be within our immediate grasp and we must be prepared to fulfil the necessary conditions. As the Mother puts it:

"To foresee destiny! How many have tried, how many systems have been elaborated, how many sciences of divination created, developed and then have perished under the charge of charlatanism or superstition. And why is destiny always so unforeseeable; since it has been proved that everything is inescapably determined, how is it that one cannot succeed in knowing the determinism with certitude?"

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book I, Canto 1, p. 5.
[2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book VI, Canto 2, p. 460.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The Mother goes on to say: "Here also the solution is found in Yoga. By yogic discipline one can not only foresee destiny but can alter it, change it almost wholly."[1]

"But who shall pierce into the cryptic gulf
And learn what deep necessity of the soul
Determined casual deed and consequence?
Absorbed in a routine of daily acts,
Our eyes are fixed on an external scene;
We hear the crash of the wheels of Circumstance
And wonder at the hidden cause of things.
Yet a foreseeing Knowledge might be ours,
If we could take our spirit's stand within,
If we could hear the muffled daemon voice."[2]

Friends, the way has been shown to us. Let us not tarry therefore making fine speeches — "the speech that labels more than it lights" — nor indulge in subtle metaphysical issues:

"For not by Reason was creation made
And not by Reason can the Truth be seen."[3]

We, the children of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, are, however, exceptionally fortunate; for it has been revealed to us that the ultimate destiny of man is godhead. Therefore, though the way is long and arduous and beset with all sorts of dangers, we shall face calmly all vicissitudes, carrying ever in our hearts the Master's reassuring words:

"Whatever the appearance we must bear,
Whatever our strong ills and present fate,
When nothing we can see but drift and bale,
A mighty Guidance leads us still through all.
After we have served this great divided world
God's bliss and oneness are our inborn right.
A date is fixed in the calender of the Unknown,
An anniversary of the Birth sublime:
Our soul shall justify its chequered walk,
All will come near that now is naught or far."[4]

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1950, p. 21.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book I, Canto 4, p. 52.
[3] *Ibid.*, Book II, Canto 10, p. 256.
[4] *Ibid.*, Book I, Canto 4, p. 59.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY PRITHWINDRA MUKHERJEE*

In the dead of the night preceding the dawn of civilisation, a million years ago, against the primitive darkness appeared the dim silhouette of a new species of animal. Striving and quarrelling, mating and hunting, gregarious, it began its cycle of existence, and the sensational and emotional impacts of everyday life teased the brain of these animals to some peculiar reactions; they wept and laughed, and the power of speech soon characterised them as *homo sapiens*. Helpless before the overwhelming elements, awe-struck by the sublimity of the universe, curious of the reason behind the mysterious unfolding of great events, they must have wondered: *Which way do we proceed?*

In a million years of anabasis, man moved from the clan to the tribe, from the tribe to the nation, from the nation to the consciousness of the world as one; and, further, to an exploration beyond the limits of this too small planet. According to Sri Aurobindo, in all early societies first we find a symbolic mentality that governs man, — as in the little-understood Vedic Age in India. From this stage the society passes on to the typal order with its increasing fixity in ideal type, and as it moves further towards the conventional stage it turns more and more into a structure of rigid grades and fixed hierarchies till in the end the whole system turns into a falsehood and a sham. Then revolting against this falsehood arise men of intellectual power and we have the age of Reason, Revolt, Progress, Freedom. Limited in aim and method, it is yet a necessary passage to the subjective age of humanity with its endless potentialities of a deeper self-discovery.

In the early ages, especially in the age of conventions, the individual has suffered enough under the weight of social laws and customs. Now the spirit of adventure and love of freedom in him has risen at last to shake off the defeaning demands of the collectivistic conservatives around him. Now at last he is free to follow the course decreed by the law of his individual self-development. Now at last he has the assurance that it is not the individual who exists solely by the community, but it is the community that exists more by the individual. Today the individual is growing increasingly stronger in order to live by himself and, consequently, preparing to live by his inmost Divine self. Judging from the present course of man's evolution, it has been rightly assumed that he has now entered the long-awaited subjective age, which is no doubt a step towards self-knowledge and towards living in and from the self. But everything depends on how this step is taken. "A psychical self-knowledge tells us that there are in our being many formal, frontal, appa-

* Passages in the first two paragraphs of this speech are written with the help of Dr. S. K. Ghose's summary of *The Human Cycle*.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

rent or representative selves and only one that is entirely secret and real."[1] And in *The Human Cycle* we have seen that the subjective period of human development becomes the most fruitful and creative when the individual does not rest in the apparent self, mistaking it for the real. For, the subjective period makes clear to us not only what man has become in the past but what he might be in the future. Existence is an illimitable Reality expressing itself in the multiple values of life. Life begins with Matter, and is fixed in type; as it develops there is an increase in the power of variation. Hence we conclude that man's individuality is his distinction because by this he understands the law of his being and development and, in the end, learns to go beyond himself. *To do this is the destiny of man* and the object of his individual and social existence. "This is done primarily through the individual man; for this end man has become an individual soul, that the One may find and manifest Himself in each human being."[2]

Thus, armed with the knowledge of the external world and satiated with it, man has to turn his gaze inward and explore yet another space, another solar system within himself, follow the truly subjective path of the Integral Yoga leading to the inevitable spiritual manifestation of the Divine Superman, which is the only destiny of man, the transitional being, in the process of evolution.

But what exactly do we mean by Superman? Is ours the popular conception that "supermanhood is nothing more important than a deification of the rare or solitary ego that has out-topped others in the force of our common human qualities"[3]? Nietzsche, for instance, presents to us "a superman who fiercely and arrogantly repels the burden of sorrow and service, not one who arises victorious over mortality and suffering."[4] But, as Sri Aurobindo points out, this is only a narrow and false presentation of the true superman; it is but an image of an enlarged human personality, a magnified and exaggerated ego, an increased power of the mind, of vital force, a massive exaggeration of the forces of human Ignorance, a return to barbaric strength and ruthlessness and force: *this would be no evolution*! "The gospel of true supermanhood," according to Sri Aurobindo, "gives us a generous ideal for the progressive human race and should not be turned into an arrogant claim for a class or individuals. It is a call to man to do what no species has yet done or aspired to do in terrestrial history, evolve itself consciously into the next superior type already half foreseen by the continual cyclic development of the world-idea in Nature's fruitful musings."[5] Sri Aurobindo further says, "For what is supermanhood but a certain divine and harmonious absolute of all

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 37.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[3] Sri Aurobindo, *The Superman* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 275.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 276. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 275.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

that is essential in man? He is made in God's image, but there is this difference between the divine Reality and its human representative that everything which in the one is unlimited, spontaneous, absolute, harmonious, self-possessed becomes in the other limited, relative, laboured, discordant, deformed, possessed by struggle, kept by subservience to one's possessions, lost by the transience and insecurity which come from wrong holding. But in this constant imperfection there is always a craving and an aspiration towards perfection. Man, limited, yearns to the Infinite; relative, is attracted in all things towards their absolute; artificial in nature, drives towards a higher ease, mastery and naturalness that must for ever be denied to her inconscient forces and half-conscient animals; full of discords, he insists upon harmony; possessed by Nature and to her enslaved, is yet convinced of his mission to possess and master her. What he aspires to is the sign of what he may be. He has to pass by a sort of transmutation of the earthly metal he now is out of flawed manhood into some higher symbol. For Man is Nature's great term of transition in which she grows conscious of her aim; in him she looks up from the animal with open eyes towards her divine ideal."[1] Sri Aurobindo specifies in the last chapter of *The Life Divine*, "But what has to emerge is something much more difficult and much more simple; it is a self-realised being, a building of the spiritual self, an intensity and urge of the soul and the deliverance and sovereignty of its light and power and beauty, — not an egoistic supermanhood seizing on a mental and vital domination over humanity, but the sovereignty of the Spirit over its own instruments, its possession of itself and its possession of life in the power of the spirit, a new consciousness in which humanity itself shall find its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment by the revelation of the divinity that is striving for birth within it. This is the sole true supermanhood and the one real possibility of a step forward in evolutionary Nature."[2]

This then is the true destiny of man: *to be the Divine Superman.*

SPEECH BY OSCAR LÄSSER

I would like to introduce the subject: "What is the destiny of man?" by quoting a sentence from a letter of the Mother: "All human beings have a spiritual destiny that is more or less near according to the resolution of each one." ("Tous les êtres humains ont un destin spirituel plus ou moins proche suivant la résolution de chacun.")[3]

Our destiny then is to surpass our animality and even our humanity in

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Superman* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 275.
[2] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1068. [3] From a personal letter.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

order to become the Divine Superman about whom Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have spoken so often. Omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence — knowledge by identity — will replace in Superman the half-knowledge, ignorance and egoism of present man.

How is this high destiny to be reached? According to the teaching of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother which is based on concrete spiritual experience, our planet is the scene of an evolution from matter to life and from life to mind. Man is the highest product of this evolution and in him the mental faculty is more or less developed, so that he is the only evolved being who is capable of detachment and self-observation. I think that we have ample proof that earthly evolution has now arrived at a crucial point. In order to master our scientific and technical progress it seems quite indispensable that man should change and transform himself radically; otherwise he will be the master of his own destruction. This is the lesson of the Bomb.

Sri Aurobindo's yoga is in fact a preparation for this new evolutionary step. The world in general and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in particular are the "laboratory" where the new supramental race is being prepared. The process of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo is to establish a total mastery of our being, that is of our mental, vital and physical parts, opening them to the Force of Transformation. At first this Force purifies the different parts of our being. By opening ourselves to the supramental Force our being will be divinised progressively.

The interesting and practical question which arises in this context concerns the mission of the individual: "Why do we live? What must we do? Which way should we choose?" A mediocre and indifferent humanity rarely asks such questions and lets itself be driven by the various currents of life like a piece of cork dancing on the billows of the sea. But there comes a moment in the evolution of each human being when this slavery to universal nature becomes intolerable, a moment when the hard blows of life make him more conscious and awaken a thousand questions demanding an urgent reply. The most important question for the individual concerns his destiny, his mission in life. How to know what one's mission is? How to fix one's goal? First of all we have to know ourselves. A knowledge of our exterior personality is not sufficient. We must pierce the shell of our outer personality which is at the mercy of a million-and-one different influences, desires, cravings and instincts and plunge into the silent depths of our being, where we shall find our real self and the true *raison d'être* of our life, called Dharma.

Looking at modern society I see with alarm how few people care to follow their Dharma, their personal destiny. The vast majority of humanity runs after material success, good social positions, wealth, power and sexual pleasures; the inner life is neglected. We are probably all acquainted with the result: one feels hollow, unsatisfied, unhappy and in order to escape from

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the void of inner emptiness one seeks refuge in constant action. "Let's have excitement and fun at all costs!" In view of this situation it is not astonishing that youth revolts violently and psychiatrists pop up like mushrooms after a summer rain.

The only true remedy for this individual and social chaos is to get into touch with our inner being and to search in inner silence for our destiny and our way. The individual Dharma, the way each of us must take, will be different. But once we have found our destiny and our inner law, let us follow this guiding star unfalteringly and without compromise! Then we shall live in the deep, true happiness and harmony which nothing can disturb.

Seeing the immense diversity of individual destinies, we should not forget that we are all on the same evolutionary way to Divinity. The experiences, joyous or terrible, in the successive lives of each individual help to evolve the godhead concealed in him. For a long time this may happen without the conscious knowledge of his outer being, but there comes a moment when the individual becomes conscious of his mission in life. Through his conscious collaboration the pace of evolution accelerates and when, after the meanderings of his evolutionary history, he becomes conscious of his spiritual destiny, yoga begins, the conscious aspiration of man to realise the Divine. According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, this realisation of and union with the Divine must be achieved in earthly manifestation. The aim of the integral yoga is, in biblical terms, to establish the kingdom of God on earth. An evasion or complete rejection of this world by means of a realisation out of manifestation, in "nirvana" for example, is thus a denial of our integral spiritual destiny.

I would like to add a few ideas on the role which AUROVILLE, the planned "City of Dawn" named after Sri Aurobindo, will play in the onward march of humanity towards its integral spiritual destiny. Auroville will offer man a collective framework for his evolution, creating a favourable atmosphere in which the individual can grow integrally in full liberty. Up to now the élite and vanguard of humanity have always been severely fettered and sometimes even destroyed by society which tends to be conservative in its outlook. I have found in my own travel experience to what a great extent we are conditioned and sometimes even tyrannised over by habitual surroundings, family, country, the time in which we live, accepted moral and religious ideas and beliefs, etc. An example: In Europe the idea of rebirth is frequently rejected and even ridiculed without any serious consideration of its merits and value; I must confess that I was no exception to the rule.

Auroville will allow and encourage each citizen to find his destiny, his way of life and to develop his true personality in an atmosphere liberated from all the limitations of traditional society.

Auroville's essential aim is the integral realisation of the Divine, of the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

underlying Unity in us. To find unity behind appearances of division is one of the glorious tasks of Auroville. But unity does not imply uniformity; on the contrary Auroville will manifest a diversity and richness of individual and collective personalities not witnessed before, because in order to become conscious of integral unity we have first to become conscious of our true individuality. Up to now very few people have arrived at a stage of complete individualisation, but this is a necessary condition in order to realise human unity in its integrality. The same law applies to the different national groups and cultures which will develop and flower more richly in this city of universal harmony. The task of Auroville will be to liberate the individual and the national and cultural groups from their ego-centric atavism by helping them to understand that they are all members of the human family, unified by the all-pervading Spirit.

This spiritual unity includes true fraternity recognising spontaneously that in essence all beings are equal and free. It is foreseen that in Auroville concord will replace conflict because men will act in accordance with their inner harmony indicating to them in a spontaneous way their true place in society.

The Mother has written: "Humanity is not the last rung of terrestrial creation. Evolution continues and man will be surpassed. It is for each one to know whether he wants to participate in the advent of this new species.

"For those who are satisfied with the world as it is, Auroville has evidently no reason for existence."

("L'humanité n'est pas le dernier échelon de la création terrestre. L'évolution continue et l'homme sera surpassé. A chacun de savoir s'il veut participer à l'avènement de cette espèce nouvelle.

"Pour ceux qui sont satisfaits du monde tel qu'il est Auroville n'a evidemment pas de raison d'être."[1])

"Auroville must be at the service of the Truth, beyond all convictions, social, political and religious." ("Auroville doit être au service de la Vérité par delà toutes les convictions sociales, politiques et religieuses."[2])

On 20 September 1966 she said, among other things, "Auroville est l'effort vers la paix dans la sincérité et la Vérité,"[3] and: "Auroville is an attempt to world peace, friendship, fraternity, unity."[4]

In conclusion, let us remember that every man carries in him an integral spiritual destiny towards which he is consciously or unconsciously evolving and that Auroville offers him a collective framework which is favourable to an accelerated, free and integral growth towards this destiny. Auroville is meant to be a beacon guiding humanity towards its glorious destiny.

(*This speech was originally delivered in French. It has been translated into English by the speaker.*)

[1] [2] [3] [4] Messages given to Auroville workers.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

MAN A TRANSITIONAL BEING

"Man is a transitional being; he is not final. For in man and high beyond him ascend the radiant degrees that climb to a divine supermanhood. There lies our destiny and the liberating key to our aspiring but troubled and limited mundane existence.

"We mean by man mind imprisoned in a living body. But mind is not the highest possible power of consciousness; for mind is not in possession of Truth, but only its ignorant seeker. Beyond mind is a supramental or gnostic power of consciousness that is in eternal possession of Truth. This supermind is at its source the dynamic consciousness, in its nature at once and inseparably infinite wisdom and infinite will of the divine Knower and Creator. Supermind is superman; a gnostic supermanhood is the next distinct and triumphant evolutionary step to be reached by earthly nature.

"The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner Spirit and the logic of Nature's process.

"The appearance of a human possibility in a material and animal world was the first glint of some coming divine Light, the first far-off promise of a godhead to be born out of Matter. The appearance of the superman in the human world will be the fulfilment of this divine promise. Out of the material consciousness in which our mind works as a chained slave is emerging the disk of a secret sun of Power and Joy and Knowledge. The supermind will be the formed body of that radiant effulgence.

"Supermanhood is not man climbed to his own natural zenith, not a superior degree of human greatness, knowledge, power, intelligence, will, character, genius, dynamic force, saintliness, love, purity or perfection. Supermind is something beyond mental man and his limits; it is a greater consciousness than the highest consciousness proper to human nature.

"Man is a mental being whose mentality works here involved, obscure and degraded in a physical brain. Even in the highest of his kind it is baulked of its luminous possibilities of supreme force and freedom by this dependence, shut off even from its own divine powers, impotent to change our life beyond certain narrow and precarious limits; it is an imprisoned and checked force, most often nothing but a servitor or caterer of interests or a purveyor of amusement to the life and the body. But divine superman will be a gnostic spirit. Supermind in him will lay hands on the mental and physical instruments and, standing above and yet penetrating our lower already manifested parts, it will transform mind, life and body.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Mind is the highest force in man. But mind in man is an ignorant, clouded and struggling power. And even when most luminous it is possessed only of a thin, reflected and pallid light. A supermind free, master, expressive of divine glories will be the superman's central instrument. Its untrammelled movement of self-existent knowledge, spontaneous power and untainted delight will impress the harmony of the life of the gods on the earthly existence.

"Man in himself is little more than an ambitious nothing. He is a littleness that reaches to a wideness and a grandeur that are beyond him, a dwarf enamoured of the heights. His mind is a dark ray in the splendours of the universal Mind. His life is a striving, exulting, suffering, an eager passion-tossed and sorrow-stricken or a blindly and dumbly longing petty moment of the universal Life. His body is a labouring perishable speck in the material universe. This cannot be the end of the mysterious upward surge of Nature. There is something beyond, something that mankind shall be; it is seen now only in broken glimpses through rifts in the great wall of limitations that deny its possibility and existence. An immortal soul is somewhere within him and gives out some sparks of its presence; above an eternal spirit overshadows him and upholds the soul-continuity of his nature. But this greater spirit is obstructed from descent by the hard lid of his constructed personality; and that inner luminous soul is wrapped, stifled, oppressed in dense outer coatings. In all but a few the soul is seldom active, in most hardly perceptible. The soul and spirit in man seem rather to exist above and behind his nature than to be a part of his external and visible reality. They are in course of birth rather than born in Matter; they are for human consciousness possibilities rather than things realised and present.

"Man's greatness is not in what he is, but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed place and secret workshop of a living labour in which supermanhood is being made ready by a divine Craftsman. But he is admitted too to a yet greater greatness and it is this that, allowed to be unlike the lower creation, he is partly an artisan of this divine change; his conscious assent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him. His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental creator.

"If earth calls and the Supreme answers, the hour can be even now for that immense and glorious transformation ...."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, pp. 7-9.)

*
**

"The animal is a living laboratory in which Nature has, it is said, worked out man. Man himself may well be a thinking and living laboratory in whom

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and with whose conscious co-operation she wills to work out the superman, the god. Or shall we not say, rather, to manifest God? For if evolution is the progressive manifestation by Nature of that which slept or worked in her, involved, it is also the overt realisation of that which she secretly is. We cannot, then, bid her pause at a given stage of her evolution, nor have we the right to condemn with the religionist as perverse and presumptuous or with the rationalist as a disease or hallucination any intention she may evince or effort she may make to go beyond. If it be true that Spirit is involved in Matter and apparent Nature is secret God, then the manifestation of the divine in himself and the realisation of God within and without are the highest and most legitimate aim possible to man upon earth."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, pp. 3-4.)

*
**

"Man is there to affirm himself in the universe, that is his first business, but also to evolve and finally to exceed himself: he has to enlarge his partial being into a complete being, his partial consciousness into an integral consciousness; he has to achieve mastery of his environment but also world-union and world-harmony; he has to realise his individuality but also to enlarge it into a cosmic self and a universal and spiritual delight of existence. A transformation, a chastening and correction of all that is obscure, erroneous and ignorant in his mentality, an ultimate arrival at a free and wide harmony and luminousness of knowledge and will and feeling and action and character, is the evident intention of his nature; it is the ideal which the creative Energy has imposed on his intelligence, a need implanted by her in his mental and vital substance. But this can only be accomplished by his growing into a larger being and a larger consciousness: self-enlargement, self-fulfilment, self-evolution from what he partially and temporarily is in his actual and apparent nature to what he completely is in his secret self and spirit and therefore can become even in his manifest existence, is the object of his creation. This hope is the justification of his life upon earth amidst the phenomena of the cosmos. The outer apparent man, an ephemeral being subject to the constraints of his material embodiment and imprisoned in a limited mentality, has to become the inner real Man, master of himself and his environment and universal in his being. In a more vivid and less metaphysical language, the natural man has to evolve himself into the divine Man; the sons of Death have to know themselves as the children of Immortality. It is on this account that the human birth can be described as the turning-point in the evolution, the critical stage in earth-nature."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 684-85.)

*
**

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"To become ourselves by exceeding ourselves, — so we may turn the inspired phrases of a half-blind seer who knew not the self of which he spoke, — is the difficult and dangerous necessity, the cross surmounted by an invisible crown which is imposed on us, the riddle of the true nature of his being proposed to man by the dark Sphinx of the Inconscience below and from within and above by the luminous veiled Sphinx of the infinite Consciousness and eternal Wisdom confronting him as an inscrutable divine Maya. To exceed ego and be our true self, to be aware of our real being, to possess it, to possess a real delight of being, is therefore the ultimate meaning of our life here; it is the concealed sense of our individual and terrestrial existence."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 685-86.)

***

"But if there is a self-existent Reality of which our existence here is a result, then there must be a truth of that Reality which is manifesting, working itself out, evolving here, and that will be the significance of our own being and life. Whatever that Reality may be, it is something that has taken upon itself the aspect of a becoming in Time, — an indivisible becoming, for our present and our future carry in themselves, transformed, made other, the past that created them, and the past and present already contained and now contain in themselves, invisible to us because still unmanifested, unevolved, their own transformation into the still uncreated future. The significance of our existence here determines our destiny: that destiny is something that already exists in us as a necessity and a potentiality, the necessity of our being's secret and emergent reality, a truth of its potentialities that is being worked out; both, though not yet realised, are even now implied in what has been already manifested. If there is a Being that is becoming, a Reality of existence that is unrolling itself in Time, what that being, that reality secretly is is what we have to become, and so to become is our life's significance."

(*Ibid.*, p. 1016.)

***

"To be or become something, to bring something into being is the whole labour of the force of Nature; to know, feel, do are subordinate energies that have a value because they help the being in its partial self-realisation to express what it is and help it too in its urge to express the still more not yet realised that it has to be. But knowledge, thought, action, — whether religious, ethical, political, social, economic, utilitarian or hedonistic, whether

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

a mental, vital or physical form or construction of existence, — cannot be the essence or object of life; they are only activities of the powers of being or the powers of its becoming, dynamic symbols of itself, creations of the embodied Spirit, its means of discovering or formulating what it seeks to be.... To become ourselves is the one thing to be done; but the true ourselves is that which is within us, and to exceed our outer self of body, life and mind is the condition for this highest being, which is our true and divine being, to become self-revealed and active. It is only by growing within and living within that we can find it; once that is done, to create from there the spiritual or divine mind, life, body and through this instrumentation to arrive at the creation of a world which shall be the true environment of a divine living, — this is the final object that Force of Nature has set before us. This then is the first necessity, that the individual, each individual, shall discover the Spirit, the divine reality within him and express that in all his being and living. A divine life must be first and foremost an inner life; for since the outward must be the expression of what is within, there can be no divinity in the outer existence if there is not the divinisation of the inner being. The Divinity in man dwells veiled in his spiritual centre; there can be no such thing as self-exceeding for man or a higher issue for his existence if there is not in him the reality of an eternal Self and Spirit."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 1022-23.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

NINTH SEMINAR

27 November 1966

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"What is true love and how to find it?

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Do you know what
is true love?

There is only one true
love, the love from
the Divine, which, in
human beings, turns
into love for the Divine.

Shall we say that
the nature of the Divine
is Love,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS TRUE LOVE AND HOW TO FIND IT?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

Love is one of the most perplexing problems of life with which everyone has to contend and find a solution. But that the solution is not easy to find is evident from the fact that there is hardly any sphere of human life in which there is greater blindness and folly than in that of love. No wonder therefore that the Mother says: "In the name of love the worst crimes have been perpetrated, the wildest follies committed."[1]

And yet, according to the Mother, love is a power of supreme value if its true form is discovered and made effective in life. What is that true form?

In our ordinary human experience love takes the form of physical passion or vital attachment or sentiment of the heart or affinity of the mind. But these are all deformations of true love because fundamentally they are egoistic and self-seeking in their character. But love in its true form is never an egoistic movement of self-satisfaction. Its intrinsic impulse is self-giving, total and unreserved. True love is entirely motiveless; it loves for love's sake alone without any demand or expectation of a return. It does not bargain or claim anything; it simply gives itself with total abandon. That is why its effect is to liberate us from the narrow confines of the ego, to widen and enlarge the consciousness, to bring a great surge of light and joy and elation in life.

For love in its origin is not an individual movement, but a universal and eternal force which manifests through the individual according to his receptivity and capacity. Love in its essence is the supreme power of Divine Oneness and Ananda which has created the universe and forever sustains and governs it. It is also the Power of Divine Unity which has plunged itself into the darkness and chaos of the Inconscience in order to bring the separated creation stage by stage back to its divine origin. Without that great holocaust of Divine Love this blind and sorrow-stricken creation in the ignorance would not have felt the impulsion to seek its divine origin and find its deliverance and fulfilment in the supreme Ananda of oneness with the Divine.

This secret impulsion of divine love is there in all creation, even in material objects and in plants and in animals. In human beings, when it is able to awaken in its purity, it takes the form of psychic love. But unfortunately it rarely gets an opportunity to emerge in its purity because the human heart is mostly governed by egoistic vital desire and passion which deform, corrupt

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 94.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and falsify the true movement of psychic love.

If then we have to find true love it can only be done by rejecting these wrong movements of vital egoistic desire and liberating the pure passion of psychic love which normally remains buried under them or is compelled to get mixed with their turbid contents.

This is not to say that vital love is always impure and false and therefore it has to be entirely rejected if true psychic love is to be found. Vital love in itself is not necessarily false and impure; it becomes so when it is usurped by the ego and acts as an instrument for its selfish ends. But it can as well become an instrument of the true psychic love, and when it does so it becomes an intensely powerful means for manifesting the psychic and divine love in human life. It brings into psychic love a flaming ardour of pure passion and rich fullness of dynamic force which are indispensable elements for the integral manifestation of the Divine Love in life.

We must therefore not say that only the psychic love is true and the vital love is false but that there is also a true vital love (as there is a true physical love and a true mental love) which is a necessary part of the integral expression of love in life. We have therefore not to reject the vital love in itself but only the deformations and limitations imposed upon it when the ego makes it a means of satisfying its self-seeking propensities. Released from the grip of the ego and converted by the psychic urge, it can be restored to its original nature and can play its proper role in the total expression of love.

But this can only happen if our human love is directly turned towards the Divine. For in any human relationship, however noble and pure, love cannot find the fulfilment of its inherent urge, its deepest longing. As the Mother says, "However beautiful and pure it [love between human beings] may be, it creates a kind of short circuit and cuts the direct connection with the Divine."[1] Therefore he who aspires to find true love must turn to the Divine alone, for it is only in the personal relation with the Divine that love in its pristine purity could be found.

*

According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Love is the only power which can ultimately cure all the pain and suffering of the world. All suffering and pain is at its root due to separation from the Divine. Therefore it can be decisively cured only by union with the Divine. Love is the greatest power of union and so ultimately love alone can end all pain and suffering by healing the gulf of separation from the Divine. In the most poignant words of the Mother, "Love alone can put an end to the suffering of the world; the ineffable joys of love in its essence can alone sweep from the universe the burning pain of separation. For only in the ecstasy of the supreme union can creation find

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966) p. 97.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

its reason of existence and its fulfilment." [1] Therefore Love is the Redeemer, the Saviour, the Victor.

And it is something still more. It is the ultimate object, the final perfection, the absolute fulfilment of life which the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo seeks to achieve. The establishment of the supramental Truth upon earth is only the necessary support and foundation of the manifestation of the Divine Love, for without that support and foundation even the Divine Love manifesting in the world cannot be secure against being sullied and degraded by the unregenerate egoistic nature of man. The manifestation of the supramental Truth is therefore the precursor of the advent of Divine Love upon earth. We may say that it is the penultimate object of Sri Aurobindo's yoga. The ultimate, the supreme object is the reign of Divine Love and Ananda upon earth. As he himself has said: "To bring the Divine Love and Beauty and Ananda into the world is, indeed, the whole crown and essence of our yoga. But it has always seemed to me impossible unless there comes as its support and foundation and guard the Divine Truth — what I call the supramental — and its Divine Power. Otherwise Love itself blinded by the confusions of this present consciousness may stumble in its human receptacles and, even otherwise, may find itself unrecognised, rejected or rapidly degenerating and lost in the frailty of man's inferior nature." [2]

To sum up we may say that Love is not only the Origin and the Cause of the universe; it is also the Redeemer and the Saviour, the Victor and the Transfigurer of life and its ultimate goal and supreme perfection.

SPEECH BY BAREN GHOSH

If in this terrestrial creation there is anything most powerful and pervasive, most luminous, energising and impelling, innate and intimate, a leaven sweetening life all through, perhaps the most outstanding of all the forces of Nature, that is love. Who is there who is not moved by its magic charm and does not yield to its irresistible sway? Yet what generally passes for love is but a caricature, a degraded, deformed and even repulsive state of the divine force that is true love. In its origin, love is a self-existent force. It came down upon earth as the Divine's Grace and installed itself at the very heart of the creation to take hold of the revolting elements and help them purify themselves and regain their native immaculate nature. In its essence, love is a transmuting agent in making the inconscient world conscious of its Divine origin. Its deformations and degradations that we see here are the result of

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 98.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 753.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

its immixture in Ignorance and obscurity. But with the clear vision of a seer one can observe that the whole course of earthly evolution is a gradual unfolding of the veiled consciousness and love is its propelling incentive. It is a mediatrix between Matter and Spirit, a cohesive force of oneness between man and man, between Earth and Heaven.

Love is not limited to the human species alone. But evidently, it has taken a more or less conscious shape after reaching the human level of consciousness. Ordinary human love is a kind of fellow-feeling, call it compassion, pity, tenderness, affection, sympathy (sympathy in its essential sense — a like-feeling), as you please. It may act in any form, in any degree but the inner character remains the same. This feeling may arise from various sources: mutual affinity or attraction between soul and soul, between mind and mind; or it may arise from a gross physical and vital attachment. And naturally enough, the quality of love is largely determined and governed by the main source from which it springs. It does not however necessarily follow that love born of the gross physical or lower vital must wallow in the mire all one's life long. That would be denying the law of evolution and the action of Grace. Taking an upward direction, it can purify and sublimate itself and turn into psychic and spiritual love.

Conversely, love born of mental affinity, especially between opposite sexes, starting, say, as Platonic love, may, unless the parties are on their guard, outstrip the limit and carry them into the abyss. Besides, ordinary human nature is a complex of inconscience, subconscience, physico-vital and physico-mental trends; it casts what was pure divine love in its own complex mould, nullifies its homogeneity and desecrates its absolute purity. Not that there are no sublime exceptions. But such exceptions must be the *élite* of humanity, a small number of rare individuals scattered here and there. That is why a good number of spiritual leaders advise shunning the world and all its attachments. But to the infinite and unprecedented good luck of man and the world, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, the two mighty Incarnations of Supreme Love, have come upon earth and plunged right down to the base of Inconscience in order to join it with the Superconscience and turn the Earth into the Home of Love, Light and Bliss. In the New Age they are initiating, nothing will be rejected as earthly or earthy. On the contrary, Heaven will emerge from everywhere, even from Hell. For there is nothing that is not the dwelling of the Divine. The Supreme's Love knows no withdrawing from anything however ugly or unlovely, however hideous, monstrous or abominable.

In the sphere of human love, we must take serious note of the Master's warning: "Love without knowledge is a passionate and intense, but blind, crude, often dangerous thing, a great power, but also a stumbling-block." [1]

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*.(Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 523.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

What then is the knowledge and from where to seek it? It is from the Master himself, from his inspiring teachings, from the ideal itself he has so powerfully held up before us — powerfully, because his very words are charged with mantric power. Says he, "We are sons of God and must be even as he".[1] Submerged in human feebleness, we may take it as too high for us, inconceivably far beyond our capacity. But we must draw strength from the divine truth that we are: "We are sons of God." The more we think of this truth, the more we meditate upon it, constantly impress it upon our consciousness, in a word the more we live it successfully, *ipso facto*, perhaps, our sense of ego, our I-ness and separateness will diminish and yield place to our identity with Him and progressively help shuffling off the animality in our manhood. Then only will it be possible for us to be imbued with true Love, the Love Divine, the Love that knows no give-and-take but gives, gives and gives, with no demand for a return. Self-giving to and not possessing the beloved — that is the criterion of true Love. Another criterion is boundless expansiveness, with no restriction. Love universalised, intensifying the spirit of oneness, embracing the whole earth, all humanity, as one intimately related family — this is the divine destiny of Man and Earth.

The way to find true Love is no groping-about-in-the-dark business. True Love is innate in our psychic love, or the Divine's Love taking the form of our psychic love. To call it forth into our conscious being as a governing factor of our life, or make it a dynamo of spiritual energy needs only our sincere and constant aspiration and prayer. Then will the Grace from above come down as its fulfilment. Especially in this vibrant Hour of God, vibrant with the supramental Power constantly in action, any sincere spiritual endeavour, however arduous, is sure of fulfilment. God bless us all.

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

"Love and Ananda are the last word of being,
the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries."[2]
Sri Aurobindo

"To approach God by love is to prepare oneself
for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment."[3]
Sri Aurobindo

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book I, Canto 4, p. 67.
[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 579.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 523.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥

"Thou who hast come to this transient and unhappy world, love and turn to Me."

Gita[1]

Love with Delight is the mighty and mystic Force secretly upbearing the entire creation. Supreme Love together with Knowledge and Power forms in fact the Great Axis round which rotate the wheels of creation, and from which evolve the ever-new manifestations, more and more glorious, more and more divine. It is because Love sustains it that this vast universe is moving progressively, in spite of its apparent disorder and disunity, in profound harmony towards a definite goal and destiny. Love is the mediating link between the Creator and the creation. Without this Divine Love penetrating and upholding each atom the creation would have long crumbled to pieces. "Of all forces acting in the universe," says the Mother, "love is the most powerful, the most irresistible; without love the world would fall back into the chaos of inconscience. Consciousness is indeed the creator of the universe, but love is its saviour."[2]

It is out of infinite love that the Supreme made the great sacrifice of plunging himself into the dead and dark Inconscience so that it could slowly awake from its ageless slumber, and be gradually illumined with the light of the spirit as it would re-emerge in multitudinous forms from the depths of the Inconscience where it originally hid itself, and that finally by following an evolutionary course, it could be turned into a material paradise where the fully evolved souls could achieve even physical immortality at will. And that will be a miracle which only the Supreme Love in conjunction with the supramental Light and Power can perform. As the Mother says: "The manifestation of the love of the Divine in the world was the great holocaust, the supreme self-giving. The Perfect Consciousness accepted to be merged and absorbed into the unconsciousness of matter, so that consciousness might rise in it and make the whole of this manifested universe a highest expression of the Divine Consciousness and the Divine Love."[3]

It is out of intense love and compassion for the earth and her children that the Supreme himself incarnated as the Avatar in every epoch (संभवामि युगे युगे), accepting all the miseries of the earthly existence so as to personally guide and speed up the course of evolution which is otherwise very slow and tardy. "The Avatar comes as the manifestation of the divine nature in the

[1] Ch. IX, Verse 33. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 147.

[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1953, p. 83.

[3] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 107.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

human nature, the apocalypse of its Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood, in order that the human nature may by moulding its principle, thought, feeling, action, being on the lines of that Christhood, Krishnahood, Buddhahood, transfigure itself into the divine,"[1] writes Sri Aurobindo. And not unoften they had to meet with quite adverse and even inhuman treatment from the very people they came to save. And still they always pardoned these ignorant men and blessed them that they might grow conscious and recognise their faults.

In the present epoch which may be called the beginning of the Supramental Age, Sri Aurobindo and the Divine Mother herself have incarnated on the earth to hasten the descent of the supramental Truth-Consciousness for the earthly transformation. And this Ashram can be said to be a repository of the Love Divine, the true Love, because of their direct presence here. The Mother tells us, "The divine Love is there, with all its intensity, all its power, a formidable power, but who is aware of it? ... You are literally bathing in an atmosphere altogether vibrant with divine Love and you are not aware of it."[2]

The Divine in his love not only smiles but smites as well. Mahakali has as much love for her children even as she strikes, as Maheshwari has in her benign grace. After all both are aspects of the same Divine Mother. "God is our wise and perfect Friend," remarks Sri Aurobindo, "because he knows when to smite as well as when to fondle, when to slay us no less than when to save and to succour."[3]

"In its essence, at its origin love is like a flame, a white flame which overcomes all resistance,"[4] says the Mother. All other loves are derivatives and diminutions of this Love. As the divine Love descends lower and lower down the planes of consciousness it gets more and more deformed. In the human being, love is altogether deformed and diminished, and finally there is no difference between human love and animal love where the true essence of love is hardly perceptible, it being an admixture of only lower vital desires, passions and impulses. This is what usually goes by the name of love in human society. "It is for this reason that the Divine Love which is at the heart of all creation and the most powerful of all redeeming and creative forces has yet been the least frontally present in earthly life, the least successfully redemptive, the least creative,"[5] writes Sri Aurobindo.

"The Divine Love, unlike the human, is deep and vast and silent."[6] "As supramental Truth is not merely a sublimation of our mental ideas, so Divine

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 140.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1959, p. 67.
[3] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 140.
[4] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1961, p. 89.
[5] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 157.
Letters on Yoga (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 763.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Love is not merely a sublimation of human emotions; it is a different consciousness, with a different quality, movement and substance,"[1] says Sri Aurobindo.

Of course, human beings and even animals are not always necessarily devoid of any true element of love. At times, in some human beings, mixed with the lower element some amount of deeper or psychic love also can be perceived. But still it is bound to be coloured by animal elements naturally involved in humanity. As Sri Aurobindo observes, "Usually the psychic element in human love, even where it is present, is so much mixed, overloaded and hidden under the others that it has little chance of fulfilling itself or achieving its own natural purity and fullness."[2] "It finds the fullness of its fire and ecstasy more easily when it is lifted towards the Divine."[3]

In a devotee, the true love for the Divine is marked with a sincere self-giving and self-consecration to the Divine, with the spontaneous feeling of joy of adoration. In fact, as Sri Aurobindo points out, "One can love divinely only by becoming divine in nature; there is no other way."[4]

Among the domestic animals also, this psychic element is often perceptible. Cats and dogs, cows, horses and elephants, and so on, that live with men have a very intimate feeling, a spontaneous respect and gratitude for men. And in them this expression of love is very true and natural as it is not touched by the narrowness of mind.

Now, in order to find true love, what is very necessary is to purify our emotions and also our understanding, and turn them Godwards. Otherwise there is every chance of confusing vital love with true love. It is necessary to rise above all selfishness and meanness and grow into wideness, generosity and nobility of heart with a spirit of self-giving without any demand.

In fact, the Mother says, it will not be possible for a human being, at his present level of consciousness, to bear the divine Love in its original purity and plenitude. To us it will appear so cold and distant that we shall hardly be able to breathe in its contact. Only if it is diluted and deformed to a certain extent with the vital vibration, or else clothed in psychic vibration, will a human being be able to perceive it.

So we shall have to grow conscious of our psychic being deep within, since it is this which contains the essence of divine Love. "The most intimate character of the psychic is its pressure towards the Divine through a sacred love, joy and oneness. It is the divine Love that it seeks most, it is the love of the Divine that is its spur, its goal, its star of Truth,"[5] writes Sri Aurobindo. But it is an extremely difficult task. Only by a true sincerity and aspiration together with a constant openness and receptivity to the

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 754. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 759.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 817. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 763.
[5] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent, Ed., Vol. 20), p. 146.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Mother's Force and Guidance from within can one expect to realise true psychic love pure and divine. "All true truths of Love and of the works of Love the psychic being accepts in their place; but its flame mounts always upward and it is eager to push the ascent from lesser to higher degrees of Truth, since it knows that only by the ascent to a highest Truth and the descent of that highest Truth can Love be delivered from the cross and placed upon the throne,"[1] observes Sri Aurobindo. We are not to eliminate human love altogether; what is needed actually is to transmute it into divine Love.

Now, individual realisation of this Love is not enough; it is necessary to realise the Divine Love in its universal and transcendental aspects also to make our realisation total. "Love at its origin," declares Sri Aurobindo, "is a self-existent force, an absolute, a transcendent.... That self-existent transcendent Love spreading itself over all, turning everywhere to contain, embrace, unite, help, upraise towards love and bliss and oneness, becomes cosmic divine Love; intensely fixing itself on one or other to find itself, to achieve a dynamic unification or to reach here towards the union of the soul with the Divine, it becomes the individual divine Love."[2]

In fact, Love will find its perfect expression in the gnostic being when the life will be totally divinised. For him love will be the joy of a diverse identity and union of soul with soul. "The power of Love supramentalised", Sri Aurobindo tells us, "can take hold of all living relations without hesitation or danger and turn them Godwards delivered from their crude, mixed and petty human settings and sublimated into the happy material of a divine life."[3]

And then, since Delight and Beauty are an inalienable part of Divine Love, one must not overlook these two parts of Love also. One has to go down to the deepest depth of Love in order to perceive the golden glow of divine Beauty and Delight. Sri Aurobindo says, "To bring the Divine Love and Beauty and Ananda into the world is, indeed, the whole crown and essence of our yoga."[4]

"The Divine Love may not be able yet to manifest on the physical plane, humanity being what it is, as fully and freely as it would otherwise do.... It is there waiting to be understood and accepted and meanwhile giving all the help you can receive,"[5] says Sri Aurobindo. "As it is all-powerful some receptivity must be prepared upon earth so that the effects may not be shattering,"[6] observes the Mother. In fact, Sri Aurobindo has already made it clear in a letter of his, the Mother tells us, that the earth is not plastic or receptive enough to contain this Love. Material substance, including the physical

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 147.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 772.
[3] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 158.
[4] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 753.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 754.
[6] *Bulletin*, February 1961, p. 91.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

consciousness also, is so rigid that in case the Divine Love in its essence manifests on earth, it will be like a bombshell. The Mother says, however, "That does not prevent Love in the form of Grace from acting everywhere and always, working almost unknown but constantly." [1] So now it is for the earth and humanity to get inwardly prepared, to be more and more plastic and receptive so as to receive and assimilate and manifest the Divine Love that is covertly brooding above.

For this we shall have to totally exceed ourselves, the humanity as well as the animality in us endeavouring to rise to our divine height, which means a radical transformation of our being and consciousness. In fact, the Mother's Love and Grace aided by her supramental Power alone can effectuate this miracle in and through us. Only we must have an infinity of patience with absolute trust and confidence in the Divine Mother. "When the day will come," declares the Mother, "for the manifestation of the supreme Love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of the supreme Love, that will indeed be the moment of Transformation. Because nothing will be able to resist That."[2]

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

Love as an entity is almost undefinable. It has its psychological element, its social and religious ways of expression, its literary interpretations and finally its spiritual culmination. Love is a cosmic and divine puissance; it is also individual as a mode of approach or linking and fusion. Love has a myriad ways of manifestation; its expression in fact is infinite. Had we sensitiveness, we could almost discern it in the very soil and stones. It manifests itself in animals and plants and finally in man in whom we discover its multiple modes. In its true form and substance, love is an elemental and divine power, a tangible sign of the grace of the Absolute for the earth, and each instrument mirrors this puissance according to its receptivity and nature, be it as an individual outflowering or as a cosmic manifestation.

Love has been the perennial subject of the littérateurs. The great epics of the world speak of two elements: love and warfare. It is the favourite subject for the poet of the *Khanda Kavya*, dramatists, novelists and lyrical poets. We have before us a whole ocean of such work and we cannot so readily give examples: there are Kalidasa, Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Milton, Tagore and Sri Aurobindo, to mention only a few. In fiction love has a special place if we pass through Boccaccio, Tolstoy, Maupassant, Dickens, the Brontes,

[1] *Bulletin*, February 1963, p. 27.
[2] *Bulletin*, February 1961, p. 91.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Zola, right upto our present-day fiction. Many of these fiction writers express the physical aspect of love and are often crude and vulgar in presentation.

To sum up: we regret that none of these littérateurs have done justice to love as an eternal power except Sri Aurobindo. They have failed due to many causes: exotic influences, false idealistic trends, Victorian abstractions, crude implications and vagueness of approach.

In Sri Aurobindo love becomes not a crude mispresentation that is allied to sensuality, but a profound and lasting emotion that unifies two souls which are one in essence but dual in actual earthly manifestation. Love in Sri Aurobindo empowers a man or a woman to rise to great heights and commit unimaginable feats of sacrifice. This sacrifice is not a compulsion, it is a glad act of offering. And without the fire of sacrifice no love can attain its true pristine purity. For love is not a mere interchange of ideas, emotions, feelings but an absolute offering of what we are, or can be, with all we have, the surrender of all our volitions, cognitions and ideations, the raising and giving of all our impulses, actions and becomings. In *Love and Death*[1] Ruru gives us a first glimpse of this love which is so puissant that it overcomes all obstacles both human and Stygian and wins back his dead love, Priyumvada. In *Urvasie*[2] Pururavus awakes to a new existence and Urvasie feels an alien feeling of love and tenderness which she had never felt before in heaven. Love makes Pururavus abandon his royal heritage, family line, even his earthly existence to attain the goal: the union with Urvasie. Modern psychologists may term Pururavus' condition a condition of infatuation. Ancient Sanskrit literature may term it a condition of love-sickness. But, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, it is neither this nor that but a condition brought forth from the estrangement of Pururavus from his complementary self, his other self known to men as Urvasie. In *Savitri* we get the true essence of love. Love here is the link between Satyavan and Savitri. Savitri is prepared to leave her earlier royal environments, dissociate herself from her self which knows the truth about the fate of Satyavan. The whole of his existence is mapped before her occult vision; yet her love is stronger than all these; even all the lures of liberation, all the fatal words and revelations of Death, even the worlds of utter darkness cannot stop her single-aimed course. Even the gnostic power and its luminous veil cannot change her unswerving will.

This is love as exemplified in Sri Aurobindo. He reveals that love not only moves men and women, it creates their destiny and is the sanction of the Supreme.

Psychologically, love is an emotion like other human sentiments. In Sri Aurobindo and the Mother it transcends the human instrumental nature and is a link between the soul of man on one side and the divine Reality on the

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), pp. 231-57.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 189-228.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

other. This is because the human soul has emanated from this Reality and is put forth into the terrestrial world with a definite mission of advancing the evolutionary progress. In the relation between man and the Divine, therefore, is the true love and not between man and man or man and woman. For, the relation between these are fraught with alien and distorting elements of jealousy, possessiveness, demand and last and darkest of all, lust. Even when man expects something from the Divine, there is a break in the spontaneous purity of the relationship. Love in its essence is not a barter, but a total consecration. Human love flourishes either on exchange or on a one-sided traffic of getting all one wants by force. According to Ramakrishna there are three types of love: the *Uttama*, the best, which is a total consecration, *Madhyama*, the medium, the barter, and *Adhama*, the lowest which gives nothing but snatches all without consideration or repayment.

In the lowest type of love, if we can term it love at all, there is a constant strife, disharmony, followed by frustration and dissipation. For nature cannot tolerate this disequilibrium and the recipient in the long run must pay for this greed with misery.

In the middle we have the usual human love, which lives on exchange and interchange. But even here man cannot save himself from the strife and disharmony because his lower nature clamours for possession, egoism and satisfaction of lower hungers and needs. The self-contentment and self-centredness debars a greater and purer love to be, which lives on selflessness, nobility, and sacrifice. But the moralist mistakes altruism for highest love. Between altruism and true love there is a wide gulf: one has behind it a hidden egoistic desire for glory and fame, the satisfaction of feeling oneself superior. In its origin altruism is a mental virtue while true love lives in the soul and expresses itself through the heart.

Of all psychological centres the heart is closest to the soul which stands behind the heart and makes the heart its opulent instrument. Other centres are either too aloof to feel the waves radiating from it or else are not refined enough to feel its vibrations. For example, the brain is too preoccupied with thought movements which are too abstract and cold to feel the wave-breath that rises in the soul. Our common life centre is crude and extrovert: it too is alien from the soul's domain. The soul in its turn is far from all these clamouring elements. It is shy, calm, happy and ever turned inwards towards the divine origin. Only the heart standing between the abstraction of the brain and the crudeness of the common life centre can harbour the delicate and miraculous soul-strain. But it is not easy to come into contact with the soul: the heart itself is often enveloped by a myriad sheaths of desires and cravings that rise up from the life centre or is pulled down by morbid influences of the lower life or even is ruled and shadowed by inertia and physical habits and routines. Often there is a mixed emotion which does not allow the soul to

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

come forward and express itself.

In yoga love has another import. There is a whole doctrine and school which bases itself on love as a way and method of approach to the Divine. But love devoid of knowledge and work (which is an active path of sacrifice) often degenerates into weakness. Hence Sri Aurobindo's approach is integral: love coupled with action and knowledge as preparatory ground for the divine intervention which completes and fulfils our yogic effort and adventure. Love in his yoga is a powerful and effective medium, but love which is active and dynamic expressing itself in work as a sacrifice, and in knowledge which is the flame of the spirit illumining and guiding our entire nature. For we do not seek only to open one part of our being to the divine radiance: we do not want our love to be limited to Bhakti as refined and living emotion, but as a light that guides, as a flame that removes all obstacles and as the sun that transfigures all our nature. That is, we do not want to limit the work of love in one sphere of our existence and perform a circumscribed role.

Love is a great link between the seeker and the sought. For essentially both these are one indivisible whole and separation is only an illusion which we overcome by our effort and by reliance on the divine Grace. Love is the living sign of the Divine in us and a pointer that we are one with Him. What is needed is the awakening to this great power and the directing of our energies towards this union. We must feel the pressing need to *be* that and remove all obstacles by a profound all-absorbing aspiration.

But if we are motivated by desires of any kind, or are impelled by ambition, or harbour in ourselves any sense of possessiveness or attachment, we can never attain the precincts of pure love. Or if we offer our sacrifice of love to a human agent, we would also commit the greatest possible of blunders, for our goal is the Divine and if we get trapped on the way in a limited human soul, we limit our ideal, our goal, and cripple our effort. Many seekers have been misled by this falsity, for purity in human relations is almost impossible and if we are enamoured of the Divine alone we should worship it as our supreme ideal without any human go-between. It is possible to discover the Divine in a man or woman, but the difficulties that stand in the way and the purity that is demanded of us in spirit and approach are so great that it would be easier to go directly to the Divine without all these interventions. Let us not harbour any false notions on this account. For no relation other than with the Divine endures at the end: and if we must love our fellow-men, let us do so through the Divine and not in a round about manner. Linking ourselves with another human being exclusively, moreover, brings to us the limitations of the person loved, adding to our own defects and deficiencies. This mars our progress. By a linking with the Divine this is avoided.

Cannot then pure love exist between human beings? There is so much

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

literature written on this theme; are we to negate all these literary creations? Love is the prime mover of the poet's imagination. The poet attempts to depict the ideal love amid a world created by his creative genius. But in actuality the facts are otherwise. Man or woman in his or her essential being is untarnished and in their origin all souls have affinities and there are some souls which are counterparts of each other. But unless there is a definite divine mission, these souls do not meet and work together in the terrestrial atmosphere. Such a meeting of souls is a rare incident. Oftener we meet souls with whom we have no affinity and with whom we are fated to exist and work side by side without sharing each other's deeper truths of spiritual reality.

The discovery of true love is a miracle. Although it exists everywhere, its pure manifestation is always a surprise and delight. We cannot discover it by intellectual seeking or by external effort or even by any process of asceticism or askesis. The manifestation of true love needs certain psychological temperamental attitudes and conditions. There must be a certain awakening and purity in the consciousness so that the soul could come forward with its miraculous warmth and all-embracing sweetness. Love visits men and women at the very beginning of their amorous adventure before the flesh has crippled and shadowed its pristine purity. It visits the first love of a mother for her offspring before demand and possessiveness have replaced the utter sweetness and wondrous felicity. In other moments it is distant, vague, making its presence felt by a sign or a faith and a reliance and a certitude. But this discovery could have been a lasting light of our existence had we known the secret, had we recognised this soul to be our true guide, our true essence; had we shifted our regard and insistence from the physical, the phenomenal and the superficial and felt this soul to be the centre of our life and cause of our becoming, then love too would have manifested in us, not as an ethical principle or an altruistic ideal, but as a true link between the human and the Divine, between all human souls which are awakened enough to feel its vibrations. The discovery of the soul is thus the discovery of love. And this process is a whole path of sadhana indeed.

While other paths proceed by the discovery of the illumined intelligence, or the higher life centre or emotional centre, Sri Aurobindo's yoga begins with the discovery of the soul. This discovery brings us at once into direct contact with the Divine and love between the soul and the Divine alters the very basis and goal of our existence. We see and feel things with another vision and heart. Things which were closed books to us suddenly reveal their true nature. And this change of consciousness gives us two opposite results. On the one hand, we become aloof from and indifferent to common vibrations, interests, values and ways. We lose interest in things that pass, in things of the world, in common ties. On the other hand, we get linked with the Divine,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

our nature grows warmer, subtler, more intense, capable of greater sweetness, of lasting delight, of sustained intensity. This is because there is a reversal of consciousness. The indifference to externalities and superficialities is not a sign of a cold nature, but a shifting of the sense of values, a change in the framework of our consciousness which has become deeper and subtler, wider and more refined. In fact we grow sympathetic to the heart of things; instead of being moved by external ways and modes, we commune with the sources of things, of ideas, of facts, of actions and of development. What we love now are not beings and their external natures; we come to be enamoured of souls which are part of the Divine, hence integral parts of our true being. We lose track of attachments and desires and their results of separation and sorrow. This is because our discovery of the soul and finding of true love has brought with them a sense of permanent union which no external vicissitudes can change or vanquish. This union is the epitome of all love and yoga. From this condition we move to a new world, a new nature, a new dawn of spiritual perfection.

SPEECH BY SHOBHA MITRA

"What is true love?" is the question put before us in this Seminar. Let me answer it with Sri Aurobindo's own words: "One can love divinely only by becoming divine in nature."[1] So long as we are in the human consciousness, limited by our ego and selfishness, we cannot love truly. True love is deep, intense, calm, bottomless like the nether ocean. It is all-powerful, self-existent, egoless and free. I imagine a true lover to be one who is a friend, a helper of the way. He is the saviour in our danger, a solace in our distress. He is the defender from all enemies, a fighter who risks his own life in order to save his beloved. He acts as an inspiration in the field of creation. He is like the vibrant chords of music that soothe the heart in sorrow and despair. A true lover is the charioteer who leads us with unfaltering steps on the sunlit path. His compassionate hands are ever outstretched to embrace us whether we be a monarch or a ragged beggar. But who is capable of such a love except the Divine Himself whose infinite love can sacrifice even his godhead in order to uplift humanity from the cycle of death and birth? Where can we find such an incomparable example of true love except in these immortal lines of the Master?

"My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
And the Titan kings assail,

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 763.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

But I cannot rest till my task is done
And wrought the eternal will."[1]

Or again,

"I have laboured and suffered in Matter's night
To bring the fire to man;
But the hate of hell and human spite
Are my meed since the world began."[2]

Here again is the example of the unfathomable depth of love, the ardent flawless self-giving of Radha, the personification of the absolute love for the Divine, whose each part and parcel cries out with this supreme anthem:

"Thine are all my thoughts, all my emotions, all the sentiments of my heart, all my sensations, all the movements of my life, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood. I am absolutely and altogether Thine, Thine without reserve. What Thou wilt of me, that I shall be. Whether Thou choosest for me life or death, happiness or sorrow, pleasure or suffering, all that comes to me from Thee will be welcome."[3]

But how to find true love? How to realise it in our life? It is only by establishing a contact with the psychic and remaining in constant unison with it that we can dream of realising true love.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"Love is the crown of all being and its way of fulfilment, that by which it rises to all intensity and all fullness and the ecstasy of utter self-finding."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 522.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Love at its origin is a self-existent force, an absolute, a transcendent (as I have put it), which does not depend upon the objects — it depends only on itself or only on the Divine; for it is a self-existent power of the Divine. If it were not self-existent, it would hardly be independent of the nature or reaction of its objects. It is partly what I mean when I speak of transcendent

[1] Sri Aurobindo, "A God's Labour", *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p 100.
[2] Ibid., p. 99.
[3] The Mother, *Radha's Prayer*.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Love — though this is only one aspect of its transcendence. That self-existent transcendent Love spreading itself over all, turning everywhere to contain, embrace, unite, help, upraise towards love and bliss and oneness, becomes cosmic divine Love; intensely fixing itself on one or other to find itself, to achieve a dynamic unification or to reach here towards the union of the soul with the Divine, it becomes the individual divine Love. But there are unhappily its diminutions in the human mind, human vital, human physical; there the divine essence of Love easily becomes mixed with counterfeits, dimmed, concealed or lost in the twisted movements born of division and ignorance."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 772.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"The Divine's love is that which comes from above poured down from the Divine Oneness and its Ananda on the being — psychic love is a form taken by divine love in the human being according to the need and possibilities of the human consciousness."

(*Ibid.*, p. 764.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"As supramental Truth is not merely a sublimation of our mental ideas, so Divine Love is not merely a sublimation of human emotions; it is a different consciousness, with a different quality, movement and substance."

(*Ibid.*, p. 754.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"Love, when it is worthy of the name, is always a seeking for union, for oneness, but also in its secret foundation it is a seeking, if sometimes only a dim groping for the Divine. Love in its depths is a contact of the Divine Possibility or Reality in oneself with the Divine Possibility or Reality in the loved. It is the inability to affirm or keep this character that makes human love either transient or baulked of its full significance or condemned to sink into a less exalted movement diminished to the capacity of the human receptacle."

(*Ibid.*, p. 773.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Nothing lasts in the mind and vital, all is a flux there. The one thing that endures is the soul, the spirit. Therefore love can last or satisfy only if it bases itself on the soul and spirit, if it has its roots there. But that means living no longer in the vital but in the soul and spirit."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, pp.761-62.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"Love is the one emotion in us which can be entirely motiveless and self-existent; love need have no other motive than love."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 535.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"One can love divinely only by becoming divine in nature; there is no other way."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 763.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"Love leads us from the suffering of division into the bliss of perfect union, but without losing that joy of the act of union which is the soul's greatest discovery and for which the life of the cosmos is a long preparation. Therefore to approach God by love is to prepare oneself for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 523.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"The inner loneliness can only be cured by the inner experience of union with the Divine; no human association can fill the void."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 814.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"It is as the love of the Divine grows that the other things cease to trouble the mind."

(*Ibid.*, p. 813.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"The love of the sadhak should be for the Divine. It is only when he has that fully that he can love others in the right way."

(*Letters on Yoga* Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 814.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"Love is not sexual intercourse.
Love is not vital attraction and interchange.
Love is not the heart's hunger for affection.
Love is a mighty vibration coming straight from the One, and only the very pure and very strong are capable of receiving and manifesting it."

(*Bulletin*, November 1963.)

THE MOTHER

***

THE RUNGS OF LOVE

"At first one loves when one is loved.
Next, one loves spontaneously but one wants to be loved in return.
Further on, one loves even if one is not loved but one still wants one's love to be accepted.
And finally one loves purely and simply without any other need or joy than that of loving."

(*Bulletin*, April 1966.)

THE MOTHER

***

"Of all loves, the most perfect love, the most lovable love is the Lord's Love."

(*Bulletin*, August 1965, p. 126.)

THE MOTHER

The Mother's remarks on the above quotations:

"Very good."

22.11.1966

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TENTH SEMINAR

19 February 1967

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Why is the Choice imperative?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Because we are at one of the "hours of God" as Sri Aurobindo puts it — and the transforming evolution of the world has taken a hastened and intensified movement.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHY IS THE CHOICE IMPERATIVE?

I

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

In her New Year message this time, the Mother has said: "Men, countries, continents! The choice is imperative: Truth or the abyss." This naturally raises the question: What is the choice and why is it imperative?

Taking a long-range view of human evolution we may say that the choice to which the Mother refers in her message is the choice of man's evolutionary destiny. In the terrestrial evolution man is a transitional being. He is not expected to remain what he is but to become a new type of being by rising to a higher level of consciousness. His destiny is to become the divine superman by exceeding his present human status.

The choice of which Mother speaks is a fundamental necessity of this higher evolution of man and it is due to his special position in the evolutionary process. The appearance of man in the earthly evolution marks, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, "a crucial step, a decisive change in the course and process of evolution; it is not merely a continuation of the old lines. Up till this advent of a developed thinking mind in Matter evolution had been effected, not by the self-aware aspiration, intention, will or seeking of the living being, but subconsciously or subliminally by the automatic operation of Nature. This was so because the evolution began from the Inconscience and the secret Consciousness had not emerged sufficiently from it to operate through the self-aware participating individual will of its living creature. But in man the necessary change has been made, — the being has become awake and aware of himself; there has been made manifest in Mind its will to develop, to grow in knowledge, to deepen the inner and widen the outer existence, to increase the capacities of the nature. Man has seen that there can be a higher status of consciousness than his own; the evolutionary œstrus is there in his parts of mind and life, the aspiration to exceed himself is delivered and articulate within him: he has become conscious of a soul, discovered the Self and Spirit. In him, then, the substitution of a conscious for a subconscious evolution has become conceivable and practicable, and it may well be concluded that the aspiration, the urge, the persistent endeavour in him is a sure sign of Nature's will for a higher way to fulfilment, the emergence of a greater status."[1]

This is the fundamental reason why man's conscious choice and participation are needed for his higher evolution. It cannot occur automatically by the subconscious impulsion of Nature as in the plant and the animal. He has

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 843.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

himself to will for this change and make an endeavour to realise it. The very fact that he is a self-conscious being in evolution makes it obligatory that he should consciously choose to raise himself to a higher evolutionary status.

So we may say that though it is man's evolutionary destiny to become the divine superman, he is required to realise that destiny by his conscious choice and endeavour. Supermanhood will not be granted to man as a free gift either by Nature or by God. In evolution he has been given the unique privilege of a self-conscious mind and will; but that privilege is also a responsibility or an obligation. His self-consciousness has been given to him so that he may become aware of the higher evolutionary potentialities awaiting him and exercise his will to realise them. Then alone, and not otherwise, can he exceed his present human status and become the divine superman.

The necessity of this choice has always been there on man ever since he appeared on earth. But in the earlier stages of his development it was mostly latent and implicit. This was because in his earlier career on earth he had first to realise fully his mental possibilities. Though man in evolution represents the mental being, in his early stages he has only a rudimentary mind. Initially and for a very long time he lives as a barbarian engrossed in his physical-vital mind and its needs and impulses. Then gradually the higher mental faculties begin to develop in him and he becomes a man of true culture trying to live in the high mental ideals and aspirations. The long centuries of human history are a vivid record of this cultural endeavour and achievement of man.

But since man in evolution is a transitional being and is not expected to stop at being a fully developed man, since it is his inevitable destiny to exceed himself by rising beyond mind into the Supermind, a time must come in human history when the call of that destiny awakens in him and presses on him with increasing urgency. Man cannot forever remain man; a time must come when he must take the forward step and become the superman.

It is when this time arrives in human evolution that the choice which was always necessary for man becomes urgent and insistent because it can then no longer be evaded or postponed. At this hour, which Sri Aurobindo calls the "Hour of God", the call of man's destiny demanding his choice becomes imperative. It is a crucial turning-point of supreme significance for man's evolutionary future.

According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, humanity at the present moment has arrived at such a crucial turning-point in its evolution. As Sri Aurobindo says, "At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny." [1] So also the Mother says: "There are, in the history of the earth, moments of transition when things that have been for thousands of years must give place to things that are about to manifest. A special concentration of the world consciousness, one might almost

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1053.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

say, an intensification of its effort, happens at such times, varying according to the kind of progress to be made, the quality of the transformation to be realised. We are precisely at such a turning of the world's history. As Nature has already created upon earth a mental being, even so, there is now a concentrated activity to bring forth in this mentality a supramental consciousness and individuality."[1]

*

From the higher end of things we can give another reason why the choice has now become imperative. The emergence of a new principle in evolution requires simultaneously an aspiration or a call for it from below and a descent and a pressure of that principle from above. The supramental Truth which is the new principle to emerge in evolution had started descending a long time back. But so far its action was of a preparatory nature and its pressure was not overtly felt because it was secret and veiled. But since its global manifestation in February 1956 the situation has radically changed. For now the Supermind is standing close, very close, at the earth's gates and is pressing insistently to emerge openly in the external life of the world. Eleven years after its advent the moment has now come when it will no more tolerate any apathetic indifference or obstructive bad-will to stand in its way. Each man and nation has to listen to its call and choose either to accept it whole-heartedly or to take the consequences of the neglect or the misuse of the opportunity offered to them. The choice is open to all between these two alternatives and no other.

*

There is a still further reason why this choice has now become imperative. Along with the advent of the supramental Truth in the earth's inner atmosphere, there has also occurred a precipitation of very dark, dangerous and destructive forces of Falsehood which are vehemently trying to oppose and frustrate that advent in order to retain their age-long grip over the life of humanity. At the present moment an acute struggle is going on between the supramental Truth and these forces of Falsehood. As the Mother herself has said, "This struggle, this conflict is becoming more and more evident, marked and visible between the constructive forces of ascending evolution, a more and more perfect and divine realisation and the forces that are becoming more and more destructive, powerfully destructive, the forces of madness that are beyond all control; it is a kind of race as to who will arrive first at the goal. It would seem that all the adverse anti-divine forces, the forces of the vital

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1953.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

world have descended upon earth, using it as their field of action and at the same time a spiritual force, highest and most powerful, has also descended upon earth for the first time to bring a new life there. That makes the struggle all the more acute, violent, visible, but also, it would seem, definitive and that is why one can hope to arrive at an immediate solution."[1]

The issue of this struggle depends partly upon the choice that humanity will make for itself at this hour. If it places itself whole-heartedly on the side of the Truth and follows its impulsions, then the Truth will establish itself in human life and the world without any need of catastrophic destruction. But if, owing to the blindness and perversity of its lower nature, it sides with the forces of Falsehood, it may invite a terrible destruction upon itself, for the Power of the supramental Truth will no more tolerate any opposition to the establishment of its reign upon earth. Each man and nation have now to make a radical choice between these two Powers which are at this moment engaged in a dire combat in the world-arena.

These then are the reasons why the Mother says that the choice is imperative. In saying it she is not referring to any arbitrary or accidental factors but is drawing our pointed attention to the fundamental necessities of man's higher evolution. This choice that is imperatively asked for is the imminent call of the Time-Spirit who as the Master of evolution will now no longer permit any evasion, postponement or hypocritical equivocation but will insist upon a sincere, straightforward and radical decision on the part of men, countries, continents, either to accept the Truth that is now imminently pressing to manifest in the world or to take the disastrous consequences of not listening to its call or misusing the opportunity. In Sri Aurobindo's own words: "Unhappy is the man or nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call. But thrice woe to them who are strong and ready, yet waste the force or misuse the moment; for them is the irreparable loss or a great destruction."[2]

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The history of mankind is the history of decisions, a history of choices between one side of a crucial issue or the other. In the past the choice has never been so crucial as it is today. Many conflicting powers have gained ascendency and it is for us to let one of these rule us and to defeat the others by our deliberate choice. This is needed to bring lasting peace to ourselves, our

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958.
[2] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

nations and the whole of mankind.

This choice is in fact a turning, an orientation of our conscious being towards certain newly manifesting principles. At present we are driven by impulses both from within and without or else we move with the popular trend or current. We do not pause to gaze deep within, to evaluate the things set before us or choose rightly our course of action. Our vested interests, our innate desires, our caprices, our foolish selfishnesses rule us. We have not learned to regulate our selfish claims. And this is amplified and reproduced in the mass-consciousness of our groups, nations, races and ideologies. This has been going on for centuries and at each crucial phase of history we have only procrastinated and left the issue in cold storage with the result that now we have no way to move except in the direction of self-fulfilment or self-annihilation.

As individuals we have not solved our problems; we have desisted from a final and decisive choice. We have, as men, not examined ourselves deeply or with candidness; we have lived on the surface and as generations pass we are growing more and more frivolous, superficial, hypocritical and banal. We shrink from our deeper realities in fear of becoming unsocial or uncultured in the eyes of our fellow beings. Time has come when we must learn that our true source is not society, nor religion, nor science but spirituality. For, by our selfishness and shallowness, by our lowness and hypocrisy we have estranged ourselves from our true being, our essence, our soul. And consequently we choose what is best to our selfish interests — the careers, the comforts, the positions, the things that bring us tangible rewards. We not only disregard all higher elements, we even attempt to reach these selfish ends at any cost, at the price of social welfare, national betterment and to the detriment of our own real progress.

Thus, unless we outgrow our ego-centricity, the problems would ever stare us in the face. If we look around, we shall be struck by the moral, religious and spiritual depravity all around us. And these are there because we have allowed them to be there by our own ignorance and self-centredness. All wrongs of our egoistic nature come back to us and at the end it is we who must pay the price of our own unconsciousness, or rather our own nature which has refused to progress. Only if we change ourselves, as the social nucleus, the conditions around too will be altered.

There are turning-points in the eras of human evolution. We now stand at such a critical juncture. The forces of nature, the powers of evolution are pushing ahead to create a new existence. If we, as individuals, refused to move, to change, to accept a greater consciousness as our pivot of existence, as the ruling centre of all we are and aim to be, then we would be eventually eliminated not so much by the gnostic power ruling the human scene, as by our own stupidity and self-centredness. For the next step is the step of the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

supramental dominion. And we must answer its call and not make the past our inspiration and ideal. The past exhausted itself long ago; if we insist on an obsolete power, the chances are that we too shall become obsolete.

It is no use expressing our choice only superficially and not living according to its demands. For that would be only hypocrisy. We must live the new way we have chosen, and grow into the new consciousness that is here as the true creator.

Mind so far has been the leader in human life. Its inadequacy to rule over the other components of our nature or to master its own creations and self has been amply illustrated in history, ethics, religion, society, science and politics. It has turned the slave of a power which was destined to be its own servitor. It has, by its own abstractions, insufficiencies, limitations, revealed that it can no more claim to be the leader of man as an individual or group or of nations or continents as international units. Our present degeneration is the result of this fundamental defect of mind. Mind in evolution has filled a gap between the rise of life and the descent of a gnostic truth. Its role of organisation, its work of consolidating diverse elements and factors and of bringing coherence into the otherwise disjointed elements had its day. Now the time has come when it must learn to accept a higher power as its guide.

There must be a new turn of the consciousness in the individual. We must learn to forsake old moorings and explore the unexpected, the unimagined and the unknown. This must be reflected not only in our far and vague ideals, but it must be made manifest in our life, our thought, our will, our most trivial actions. In other words, we must now choose the path of the spirit, the path of light and of self-sacrifice.

But this turning of the individual cannot be complete unless there is a new growth of conciousness in the collectivity as well. The collectivity must learn to choose a greater way of life, a higher path of self-fulfilment. But it is equally true that unless we as individuals, the units in this collectivity, change our consciousness, there can be no reorientation of the consciousness of the masses. These masses are now ignorant, capricious, unpredictable bodies. There must arise some spiritual leaders who have the true vision and the experience. And it is these leaders who must choose rightly and for the benefit of their collectivity without jeopardizing the interests of other collectivities. If not, there may ensue another global war, or an endless series of terrible conflicts as we witness today.

Behind these conflicts there is a single cause which we as individuals and as nations must eliminate. The power of the spirit is active amongst us. And if we answered its call, opened ourselves to its transforming action, then we would rise both as men and nations. If not, we must be ready for ceaseless privations both from within and without and, till we were ready, this insistent

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ordeal would continue.

We have known the utility of nationalism, but now it is barring the way of our progress by its stagnancy and ego-centricity. The role of the empire-builder is now extinct. We cannot repeat the 'opium wars', the Monroe Doctrine, the role of the victorious white man, the imposition of our ideologies on less advanced peoples. We must learn the futility of every such attempt, be it of altruistic origin or of vested interests. They lead nowhere except to increase the existing conflicts of ideals, ideologies and interests. Just as the individuals have to realise that individualism is not everything, so too the nations must learn that nationalism is not the supreme ideal and that they cannot survive unless there arises a new consciousness and a new orientation. Just as man and nation are interdependent entities, so also national being and world community need each other for plenitude and perfection and even for survival.

Even larger ideologies — political, economic, racial, religious, cultural — that move continents and are the moving impulse of the vast run of humanity, are not binding enough to create a new spirit. These only pit themselves against other such ideologies and at the end we face the same discord as we find between man and man and nation and nation; only the ground has been extended but the problem remains the same and that too with a greater burning intensity.

This is one side of the picture. On the reverse side we have the power of the spirit which is ever active to create a new humanity, a new national being, a new international or global structure. It is attempting to eradicate barriers, efface limiting conditions and create a ground for the manifestation of a true harmony. But always the ego of man or the race or the nation, or the conflict of ideologies stand in the way and bar the true achievement of this aim. But this does not deter the guiding light. The limitations that surge up are only challenges. Now we have arrived at a juncture when there can be no turning back. History shows us several reversals in the fate and life of men and nations due to the emergence of certain contrary powers. Hence their progress was always chequered and never uninterrupted. But with the birth of a new gnostic consciousness, we must once for all decide not to fall back into the old errors, falsehoods and limitations. For if we accept the truth, the truth of the spirit, we can achieve what so far has remained a dream. We can achieve what the mightiest minds of men have failed to realise. Shall we turn back from the very gates of supreme consummation due to our sloth, our narrowness, our attachment to the fossilized past?

We are now living in an era when history and destiny are being overhauled from their very base. For, so long the change in man's consciousness has been more or less superficial and the result too has been of a similar nature. The changes have been more on the surface than in the depths of the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

being. The advents of a Buddha, a Lao-tse, a Christ or a Krishna have not been so fruitful and deep in their effects, keeping pace with the light they brought with them, the sacrifice they made for mankind. Humanity at its core, in spite of all the modern scientific advancement, has not progressed quick enough or deep enough to meet the pressing need of a greater light. For progress is speed and speed is life and if we must survive, we must progress speedily in all the spheres of human consciousness. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo bring with them this great consummation, the culminating spiritual fulfilment of all that has gone before. If humanity must benefit from their work and sacrifice, it must advance in the true sense and make itself worthy of their colossal divine labour. Let us not sit down and while away our precious time in day-dreaming.

It may be asked: What is the guarantee that this new spirituality will redeem humanity out of its distress and calamity? May it not perhaps prove to be another of those utopias? This question arises because a large portion of humanity has no clear notion of true spirituality; to most it is an annex to religion or ethics, or something vague. Many others consider it to be an abstract proposition, having perhaps some philosophical or metaphysical validity. This is because true spirituality is rare and spirituality in its perfect sense has not manifested itself. But with the manifestation of the gnostic Truth true spirituality becomes a concrete, creative and all-embracing reality. It is far from being a utopia and is not ineffective like so many human panaceas. As yet it is working on the inner layers of life and mind and on the subtle physical; what its plenitude of manifestation would be, is as yet unimaginable to man. It is for its full manifestation that the Mother asks us to choose imperatively. And the truth she refers to is this supramental Truth, whose decisive descent in the earth-consciousness is being resisted by such a violent upsurge of evil and falsehood in the world that we who are seekers of the spirit must remain tranquil, unmoved, choosing finally and irrevocably this Truth and its ways.

It is only by a reorientation of the consciousness that we can at present feel the presence and working of this Truth. In its very nature it is divine, and as such we must be very sincere and pure if we wish to feel its presence and listen to its dictates. It would, in the end, tolerate no falsehood, however veiled or latent. We need a great and integral purification in order to be its instruments. And if the world is to become the field of its working, the world must, once for all, decide not to lean to the way of the falsehood. For, our present actions, motivations, and determinations of value are based on a crude admixture of verity and falsity. This we must get rid of, if we wish to become true instruments of the Truth and take a step forward in the march of evolution.

On the other hand, human possibility in the field of science and techno-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

logy has reached a high state of perfection. But in the hands of unregnerate man, this now either spells uncontrolled destruction or else turns him into a vain creature of comfort and ease. Unless man decides to change himself and his ways, there may be a great destruction, specially with science helping him to bring untold suffering.

Thus the hour has come when we must rise and make a radical choice between the New Truth and the old persisting Falsehood. The supreme victory is now possible if only we consent to participate in it by our decisive choice. Our greatest hopes can become a reality if only we have the heroic courage and the clear light as our guide and a greater power as the true creator of our destiny.

SPEECH BY SRIJIT BHATTACHARYA

I would not like to deliver a scholarly lecture with a complex philosophical exposition but to give a straightforward presentation of a few ideas that sail through my mind as I contemplate over the subject which the Mother has chosen for our Seminar.

It is evident that the Mother's New Year message this time, "Men, countries, continents! The choice is imperative: Truth or the abyss," is not specifically meant either for the Ashramites or for the seekers of Truth alone, but for the world at large. Thus every individual, irrespective of his colour, creed or country is involved in this simple, direct but heart-penetrating message of the Mother. We have now reached such a culminating stage of human development that we are compelled to make a sure and definite decision, which will ultimately be responsible for determining our destiny. In fact, this Truth of which the Mother speaks, manifested upon earth over a decade ago and has since then been working upon humanity in a very direct way. That is why the Mother in her New Year message for 1965 told us to salute the advent of the Truth, and last year she advised us to serve the Truth. But the egoistic mind of modern man has failed completely to appreciate its power, its value and its unceasing triumphant action, and is consequently driving towards a transient material happiness to suit his immediate purpose. Man has now become so egoistic that till the last moment of his life he never does a single thing save one, that is, to satisfy his own desires and passions. And in every field of life, in religion, politics, science, etc., this sense of ego-centricity prevails. That is why Truth, even after its manifestation upon earth, remains in the catacombs of oblivion.

Mankind, today, is so much swayed by the superficial glamour of material achievements that this manifested Truth seems to it like a shimmering

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

marsh-light falling upon some vague tract of which it hardly takes any cognisance. The majority of men believe that Truth is something like a shadowy phantom which can never take any form and reality in life and which wanders always in the limbo of the soul. But as this manifested Truth, which is nothing but the dynamic power of the Supreme Reality, has now started acting on the earth rapidly and firmly in order to fulfil its inevitable mission, man will have either to side with its action or to enter into the dark abyss. The reign of Truth upon earth is predestined by the Supreme, and its activities will be the governing principle which man will have to accept. At the present moment he is urgently called upon to accept it by his conscious choice. But if in his blindness he turns his back upon it and does not make the needed choice then his destiny will be harsh and cruel, for he will sink into the abyss. It is impossible indeed not to be serious under the pressure of this demand of this destiny.

As long as we move on the surface of life it remains a facile and a commonplace affair, but when we enter into the depths below and grapple with fundamental issues, like the destiny of the soul, the secret of life and death, of truth and falsehood, everything becomes austere and terrible, and we become grave, and we are compelled to ponder deeply over these issues and to make radical decisions. At the present moment we are required to make such a radical decision and that is why the choice has become imperative.

As the abyss at its heart is eternal darkness and ignorance, so Truth in its essence is the Love Divine, unique, invincible — it is the straight gateway to Beatitude. In this crucial moment let us once and for all bid farewell to our egoism, ignorance, insincerity, inertia, and scepticism, and accept the working of the Truth upon earth which will alter completely our life, making it at every stage of its progress more luminous, more creative and more divine.

SPEECH BY SWADESH CHATTERJI

I tell you frankly that I find it very difficult to answer this question. I find that it is beyond my scope to give a definite answer. One needs a spiritual insight, which I do not vouch to possess, in order to see the real necessity of the choice. But merely finding something difficult is no reason for not making an attempt; also let us note that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother take no objection to our attempts to grasp things spiritual even mentally.

In this year's message, the Mother addresses the men, the countries and the continents. Today nations are so very much self-centred that they are formidably enwrapped in their own monstrous ego. Sri Aurobindo says in reference to India, "Mother India is not a piece of earth; she is a power, a

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Godhead, for all nations have such a Devi supporting their separate existence and keeping it in being."[1] But at present it is not this Devi, the truth of being of each nation, that governs its actions. A Rakshasik ego has clouded the souls of the nations, with the result that what is manifest today is only selfishness, narrowness and strife. Sri Aurobindo affirms, "The community is a formation of the Reality, a manifestation of the spirit of man, and there is a truth, a self, a power of the collective being."[2] Hence I believe, for the nation the choice of the Truth is identical with the choice of being an instrument of its soul, not of its ego. This choice is a necessity for the very survival of our civilisation.

But what is more important is that man the individual and humanity as a whole should aspire for the Truth. Humanity today stands at the crossroads. Two roads lie wide open before it. Like the young traveller in the Mother's story, "Le sentier de tout-à-l'heure"[3] ("The Path of Later On"), man has to make his choice between the road leading to the Truth and that leading to the darkest abyss. This year's message of the Mother comes as the timely warning as if saying, "Take heed, there is yet time." It is left to man either to repeat the story of the unfortunate traveller or to march on the road of Truth none has ever trod.

At this stage of evolution a choice becomes imperative because the mode of evolution is about to undergo a radical change. So long evolutionary Nature has pushed man forward. Sri Aurobindo has told us that the evolution in the supramental age will be a conscious one. Man will himself have to direct the evolutionary movement. If this be true we can easily see that the choice the Mother puts before man is only the first among a number of others that will follow. But this choice between the Truth and the abyss assumes the greatest importance for it will determine man's goal and the direction of his future evolution.

There is a last and most essential reason for the imperativeness of the choice. In 1958 the Mother said, "If things continue to move at this speed, it is more than possible, it is almost evident that what Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter would be a prophetic announcement: 'The supramental consciousness will enter into a phase of realising power in 1967.' "[4] Indeed things have moved well in the spiritual domains. The supramental Light has entered the very core of inconscience "for transmutation of the base and the dark into the luminous and the true, for transmutation of the ugly and the wrong into the beautiful and the right."[5] After her experience of November 5, 1958 the Mother said, "At the very bottom of the inconscience most

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 424.
[2] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1049.
[3] La Mère, *Paroles d'autrefois* (1946), pp. 1-7.
[4] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958, p. 87.
[5] Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 3.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

hard and rigid and narrow and stifling I struck upon an almighty spring that cast me up forthwith into a formless limitless Vast vibrating with the seeds of a new world."

In the modern man there has occurred a sharp bifurcation between his spiritual self and his material self. The Time-Spirit demands of man an immediate spiritual awakening. If man cannot respond to this urgent call then his cherished material civilisation will be shattered like a thing without consistence. For let us not forget the action of Mahakali:

"Her wrath is immediate and dire against treachery and falsehood and malignity, ill-will is smitten at once by her scourge. Indifference, negligence and sloth in the divine work she cannot bear and she smites at once with sharp pain, if need be, the untimely slumberer and the loiterer."[1]

Yet let us not get too discouraged. It is true that one wonders: how can the supramental transformation be effected in the very age when human and national conflicts are at their acme? But let us not forget that this is such a time when even a turning towards Truth will change man's destiny, for now is precisely the moment "when the Spirit moves among men and the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being;...when even a little effort produces great results and changes destiny."[2]

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

The Crucial Choice

"This yoga can only be done to the end by those who are in total earnest about it and ready to abolish their little human ego and its demands in order to find themselves in the Divine. It cannot be done in a spirit of levity or laxity; the work is too high and difficult, the adverse powers in the lower Nature too ready to take advantage of the least sanction or the smallest opening, the aspiration and tapasya needed too constant and intense. It cannot be done if there is a petulant self-assertion of the ideas of the human mind or wilful indulgence of the demands and instincts and pretensions of the lowest part of the being, commonly justified under the name of human nature. It cannot be done if you insist on identifying these lowest things of the Ignorance with the divine Truth or even the lesser truth permissible on the way. It cannot be done if you cling to your past self and its old mental, vital and

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 28.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

physical formations and habits; one has continually to leave behind his past selves and to see, act and live from an always higher and higher conscious level. It cannot be done if you insist on 'freedom' for your human mind and vital ego. All the parts of the human being are entitled to express and satisfy themselves in their own way at their own risk and peril, if he so chooses, as long as he leads the ordinary life. But to enter into a path of yoga whose whole object is to substitute for these human things the law and power of a greater Truth and the whole heart of whose method is surrender to the divine Shakti, and yet to go on claiming this so-called freedom, which is no more than a subjection to certain ignorant cosmic Forces, is to indulge in a blind contradiction and to claim the right to lead a double life.

"Least of all can this yoga be done if those who profess to be its sadhaks continue always to make themselves centres, instruments or spokesmen of the forces of the Ignorance which oppose, deny and ridicule its very principle and object. On one side there is the supramental realisation, the overshadowing and descending power of the supramental Divine, the light and force of a far greater Truth than any yet realised on the earth, something therefore beyond what the little human mind and its logic regard as the only permanent realities, something whose nature and way and process of development here it cannot conceive or perceive by its own inadequate instruments or judge by its puerile standards; in spite of all opposition this is pressing down for manifestation in the physical consciousness and the material life. On the other side is this lower vital nature with all its pretentious arrogance, ignorance, obscurity, dullness or incompetent turbulence, standing for its own prolongation, standing against the descent, refusing to believe in any real reality or real possibility of a supramental or superhuman consciousness and creation, or, still more absurd, demanding, if it exists at all, that it should conform to its own little standards, seizing greedily upon everything that seems to disprove it, denying the presence of the Divine, — for it knows that without that presence the work is impossible, — affirming loudly its own thoughts, judgments, desires, instincts, and, if these are contradicted, avenging itself by casting abroad doubt, denial, disparaging criticism, revolt and disorder. These are the two things now in presence between which every one will have to choose.

"For this opposition, this sterile obstruction and blockade against the descent of the divine Truth cannot last for ever. Every one must come down finally on one side or the other, on the side of the Truth or against it. The supramental realisation cannot coexist with the persistence of the lower ignorance; it is incompatible with continued satisfaction in a double nature."

November 1928

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1310-11.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"You can be sure that the best possible will happen and that the whole world is going as quickly as possible towards its golden transformation."

8.1.1966

(*White Roses*, 1973, p. 134.) THE MOTHER

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ELEVENTH SEMINAR

30 April 1967

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"What is the need of the hour?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Sincerity.

Do not try to deceive the Divine.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

In the progressive movement of earthly evolution there arrive certain crucial periods which are of great significance because they are the turning-points when the evolutionary movement takes a decisive forward leap. At each of these crucial periods there is a certain demand of the Time-Spirit who insists upon the fulfilment of certain conditions by the evolving beings in order to test their fitness for the higher evolutionary status. This demand of the Time-Spirit can be spoken of as "the need of the hour."

At the present moment humanity has arrived at one such crucial turning-point which has no parallel in its past evolutionary history. Because of its supreme significance for the evolutionary destiny of man, Sri Aurobindo has called it the "Hour of God."

The subject of this Seminar, "What is the need of the hour?" can therefore be more explicitly worded as: "What is the need of the Hour of God?" In other words, what is the demand of the Time-Spirit at the present moment? What are the conditions which the Master of evolution requires us to fulfil before we can be considered fit or ready to rise to the supramental status which is the next step in earthly evolution?

The supramental evolution is a universal process affecting the whole human race. But even till this day, when the manifestation of the supramental Truth in the external life of the world is imminent, there is hardly any awareness of it in the general humanity, much less any conscious effort to be ready to receive it. But for us, who call ourselves sadhaks of Sri Aurobindo's yoga, it should be different. Even though the rest of humanity is still asleep, we at least, even though a small minority, are or should be awake to the significance of the present moment and should be trying to fulfil the need of the present hour.

So instead of considering the question in its wider universal context, it would be more pertinent to consider it in its direct bearing upon us. For the very fact that we call ourselves Sri Aurobindo's disciples imposes a great responsibility upon us, for it means that we are expected to do something very special which, at this juncture of earth's history, is of the utmost importance for the destiny of the whole human race.

What then is demanded of us at this hour to make ourselves ready?

Fundamentally the demand is for each of us to make a decisive choice between two contradictory elements in our nature pulling us in opposite directions and making us lead a double life. As Sri Aurobindo has said:

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Every sadhak is faced with two elements in him, the inner being which wants the Divine and the sadhana and the outer mainly vital and physical being which does not want them but remains attached to the things of the ordinary life. The mind is sometimes led by one, sometimes by the other. One of the most important things he has to do, therefore, is to decide fundamentally the quarrel between these two parts."[1]

Sri Aurobindo's yoga, being integral in its aim, insists upon a total transformation of all the parts of our nature and therefore cannot allow the persistence of these contradictory elements in us for ever. Some day or other the outer vital and physical parts which remain attached to ordinary worldly desires and interests must convert themselves and, receiving the higher Truth, allow themselves to be transformed. The higher parts in man's nature — his psychic being, his thinking mind and his higher vital — are relatively easy to change because they readily open to the Truth and consent to its transforming action. But the lower parts — the external vital and the physical — are most recalcitrant to admit any change. The central difficulty in Sri Aurobindo's yoga lies in the obstruction in these lower parts.

In spite of the extreme difficulty in changing these parts, the necessity of converting and transforming them is fundamental in Sri Aurobindo's yoga because the external personality and nature of man is almost entirely governed by them. They dominate his habitual modes of thinking, feeling and action and largely determine his character and temperament. So long as these parts do not change, all the spiritual endeavour and realisation in the inner and higher parts remain mixed, uncertain and inconclusive. There can be no definitive transformation of the whole life unless these parts consent to be changed.

It is because the obstruction in these lower external parts is so very obstinate that the yogis of the past have declared that it is insurmountable and abandoned the effort to transform them. They remained satisfied with the inner realisation of the Spirit because they did not succeed in changing the outer personality in man. They could not join together the two ends of existence. Spirit and life were declared to be eternally incompatible and any attempt to unite them was treated as futile. Human nature was considered incorrigible and an escape into the immune and immutable Spirit was offered as the only lasting solution.

But Sri Aurobindo never accepted this defeatist solution of life's difficulties. On the contrary, he made it the central aim of his yoga to transform this lower external nature of man at its very roots whatever be the price that may have to be paid for it. What the other yogas have left undone is the fundamental thing to be done in his yoga because on it depends the whole suc-

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1645.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

cess of its aim. If the external nature of man remains unchanged, if the spiritual realisation remains confined to the inner consciousness, then it only means repeating the old failure. But Sri Aurobindo refuses to repeat it; he categorically insists that Spirit must transform life and divinise Matter.

Those who call themselves sadhaks of Sri Aurobindo's yoga are therefore required to remember that its indispensable condition is this change of the outer lower nature and the external personality. It is incumbent on all the followers of Sri Aurobindo to undertake the task of this change however difficult it may prove to be. If, however, they shrink from it because of its extreme difficulty then they are shirking the most essential part of their work. And if they shirk it, if they do not change their outer personality, how can they call themselves sadhaks of Sri Aurobindo's yoga? If they refuse to overcome the pull in their lower nature which keeps them tied to the ordinary life of worldly attachments, if they refuse to remove the contradictions which stand in the way of the aspiration in their higher parts, if they remain divided, then it means that they only profess to be sadhaks of his yoga but refuse to practise that which is the most essential part of it.

I must point out here that what I am now saying is not my own view of the matter. I am only repeating what Sri Aurobindo himself has very distinctly said on this very crucial issue. Let me speak in his own words:

"It was inevitable that in the course of the sadhana these inferior parts of the nature should be brought forward in order that like the rest of the being they may make the crucial choice and either accept or refuse transformation. My whole work depends upon this movement; it is the decisive ordeal of this yoga. For the physical consciousness and the material life cannot change if this does not change. Nothing that may have been done before, no inner illumination, experience, power or Ananda is of any eventual value, if this is not done. If the little external personality is to persist in retaining its obscure and limited, its petty and ignoble, its selfish and false and stupid human consciousness, this amounts to a flat negation of the work and the sadhana. I have no intention of giving my sanction to a new edition of the old fiasco, a partial and transient spiritual opening within with no true and radical change in the law of the external nature. If, then, any sadhak refuses in practice to admit this change or if he refuses even to admit the necessity for any change of his lower vital being and his habitual external personality, I am entitled to conclude that, whatever his professions, he has not accepted either myself or my yoga."[1]

These words of Sri Aurobindo tell us very precisely what is the need of the present hour, the Hour of God. Each one who professes to be a disciple of Sri Aurobindo must remember these words and make the crucial choice

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), pp. 1305-6.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

which can now no longer be postponed or evaded. If, however, any sadhak still refuses to make this choice and to carry it out sincerely in practice, if he still persists in living a double life, he is only trying "to deceive the Divine" as the Mother has said in her message to this Seminar which I have already read out to you.

At this hour, those who sincerely make the right choice will become the true children of the Mother whom she will surely lift up to the Truth. But for those who still follow the lure of the old life, what can she do? They shall have to take the inevitable consequences of their wrong choice: "the abyss". This is the warning that Sri Aurobindo has given to all who profess to be his disciples. Let me repeat it in his own words:

"Those who are not straightforward cannot profit by the Mother's help, for they themselves turn it away. Unless they change, they cannot hope for the descent of the supramental Light and Truth into the lower vital and physical nature; they remain stuck in their own self-created mud and cannot progress."[1]

The choice is open before each one of us either to remain stuck in this self-created mud of the lower nature and sink into the abyss or in all sincerity to open to the Truth which the Mother has brought close to our doors and allow it to new-create us and lift us up into the New Life. The choice is imperative. The need of the hour, the Hour of God, is to make it.

SPEECH BY AMITA SEN

The hour is unique because it is an hour of God, when "the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being."[2] All that has been promised to man through the ages is now ready to be accomplished. It is a moment when the Divine Grace has come embodied on earth to bridge the gap between man and God, to kindle the Fire in the closed heart of things.

But such a transfiguration does not come of itself. Man too must collaborate, must want the New Light so that it may change his present life. And as the pressure from above grows, many get frightened and turn to anything whatsoever to get out of it. In the Mother's own words: "Lorsque le Seigneur s'approche le plus près des hommes pour établir un rapport conscient avec eux, dans leur folie, c'est à ce moment-là qu'ils font les plus grosses bétises. C'est vrai, c'est tout à fait vrai, c'est au moment où tout se tait pour que l'homme devienne conscient de son Origine, que, dans sa folie, pour se

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed. Vol. 24), pp. 1308-9.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

distraire, l'homme conçoit ou éxecute les pires stupidités."[1] ("When ...the Lord approaches most closely to men, to establish a conscious relation with them, it is then that in their folly they commit the grossest stupidities. This is true, altogether true, it is at the moment when all is silenced in order that man may become conscious of his Origin that he, in his folly, in order to distract himself, conceives or carries out the worst stupidities.")

The need of the hour, then, is receptivity, as complete as possible, in all the parts of the being, in all the activities of life. The way to attain this receptivity is through aspiration, peace and purity —

aspiration for the higher Light to manifest,
peace which prepares the ground for its coming, and
purity which opens all the parts of the being
to the sole influence of the Divine.

SPEECH BY ANAND REDDY

In ringing prophetic tones Sri Krishna declared: "Whenever there is the fading of the Dharma and the uprising of unrighteousness, then I loose myself forth into birth."[2] This in short is the condition of our world at present. The unrighteousness and Adharma that have constantly been ruling our earth have at present gained their full strength. They are the tyrant rulers of our modern life. In their oppressive rule we find that the life of humanity is tormented by mounting tensions. The fever and fret of the world have exceeded all limits and life seems to be choked with monstrous mechanisms.

If we look behind the apparent surface of things we shall see that these shocking conditions of the world are due to an upsurge everywhere of stupendous forces which are so baffling and intractable that the human mind, even with its best capacity and wisdom, feels more and more incapable of controlling them. The root-cause of these unprecedented conditions of the world lies in the inner nature of man himself. This inner malady is the result of a one-sided and unbalanced development of human life. Man has mastered the forces of the material world. He has sailed across the seas, scanned the skies and delved deep into the secrecies of Nature but he has not yet peeped into his true inner being. It is this deficiency in his life that is the root-cause of all the abnormality, tension and conflict that are increasingly felt in the external spheres of politics, economics, morals, etc.

We also feel this deficiency in our own daily life. Often we come across

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, April 1965, p. 52.

[2] *Gita*, Ch. IV, Verse 7. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by Anil Baran Roy, p. 68.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

so many inexplicable and complicated problems that we feel we are only playthings of nature. We fall victims to unknown diseases, we meet with accidents — we are helpless puppets of nature forces. This sense of helplessness awakens us to the need for an intervention of a higher force — a force that can radically change our inner consciousness and render us free from our human bondage.

This awakening to the need of a radical change in the inner consciousness of the individual and of humanity is the primary demand of the hour. This radical change cannot be brought about, as some of the moderners think, by any amount of moral effort or religious improvement but only by the intervention of a new Truth and a new Power. Messiahs and prophets in the past gave us a hierarchy of truths which have assumed the form of so many religions and cults. But these truths or half-truths do not have the power to change human nature, much less transform it. As Sri Aurobindo maintains, it is the supramental Truth that alone has the power to transform human nature into divine nature. This Supreme Power, fortunately, has been brought down upon earth by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. This, then, is the Power that alone can answer to the present need of the individual and humanity. It alone can stem the rising tide of the violent and anarchic forces which threaten to engulf human civilization.

It is true that this higher spiritual Power, the supramental Force, is pouring upon us in this Hour of God. But all depends upon our choice to collaborate or not, with this Force in its manifestation. As the Mother says, "It is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances." And, if we choose the Truth, we help the earth to become the "Spirit's manifest home". As Sri Aurobindo says, this will eventually bring superman to

> "reign as king of life,
> Make earth almost the mate and peer of heaven
> And lead towards God and truth man's ignorant heart
> And lift towards godhead his mortality."[1]

In this Hour of God a little effort for a higher life is sure to bring great results, for, this Hour is pregnant with Divine Grace and Force. Let us therefore give up ourselves entirely into the hands of the Divine and open wholly to the descending Force. It is only then that

> "A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell
> And take the charge of breath and speech and act
> And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns
> And every feeling a celestial thrill."[2]

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book XI, Canto One, p. 707. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 710.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

We may not be able to attain these wonderful glories entirely in one life but we shall have the joy and pride of becoming "the voices of the vanguard, the torch-lights of the pioneers."[1] We shall be the few to be transformed into 'pure gold' and the ones who will "manifest Force without violence, heroism without destruction and courage without catastrophe."[2] And, we shall become the pivots around which the world will wheel into new spiritual destinies.

This, then, is our luminous future. Let us therefore rise to the occasion and pray to the Mother:

"Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born, against the past that seeks to endure, so that the new things may manifest and we be ready to receive them."[3]

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The world today is a mass of opposing forces striving for supremacy, ascendancy, and the result is a vast unrest, a turmoil of human conditions, of human values, of ideals and ideologies, of facts and realities. There is a power which is driving man in spite of himself towards self-fulfilment. There are other powers very persistently active to check this advancement. These are the powers of vested interests, the clamouring demands of divers egos in men and in nations, and the false cults of hedonism, barbarism and self-assertion which rule men through their inferior nature. Man at present is no less a slave to false and ignorant forces than were his predecessors. Only, the moral and spiritual depravity is becoming more and more accentuated because of a higher light working at his elbow and making his limitations all the more poignantly perceptible. At this crucial cross-roads of human destiny, man is ignorant of his true need. He seeks a continuation of the old habits, old ties, old associations, old methods and values. The new and the unexpected scare him.

Our society shows clear signs of disintegration. All solutions to avert it are merely patchwork. Whatever may be the reason attributed, the remedy never proves to be a true remedy. Our political life is only a hotbed for seekers of fame and economic advantage. We have few selfless workers aiming at a radical and fruitful change. And our international relations and

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 398.
[2] The Mother, *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1957.
[3] "Students' Prayer" given by the Mother.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

our economic policies are framed in patterns that leave no room for any true inner or outer freedom. Our cultures and cultural activities are merely masks that veil the true soul of the nation, instead of becoming unfailing beacons of its light and beauty. Our art, literature, music, poetry and stage depict these sad failings. Catering for lower and vulgar tastes has now become the task for them. Religion has become archaic with its doctrines and dogmas, its set and soulless principles. So too ethics, as a pragmatic discipline of righteous conduct, has long proved itself to be useless. Science as a principle that shows a path and guides man has been found to be inadequate, in spite of its technological advances and nuclear progress. All these pursuits have not yet revealed any tangible path that can lead man to a better world because none of them have the power to change him or to show a workable process of transformation. For us, therefore, the need of the hour is to turn towards the Spirit, open ourselves to its highest creative and transforming power and let it guide our personal and collective existence.

But it is not easy to open ourselves to this highest power of the Spirit, the power of the Supermind. For the past lives on in us too persistently, the old nature in us does not offer itself to change so easily, and our whole psychological constitution is too complex and discordant to become a happy instrument for the working of this new power. The forces of ignorance have a great control over us; the retarding agencies make us their easy tools. And consequently we are loath to admit any change within us.

More than anything else today we need an opening to this new transforming power that is now swiftly manifesting on earth; we need an unshakable faith, an immaculate sincerity, a total self-giving to this new force. But before we can hope to attain these psychological conditions, there must awaken in us an intense urge to alter the present conditions.

It must not be supposed that all the factors mentioned above such as religion, science, ethics, etc., have done nothing to further the progress of humanity. On the contrary, they have played a cardinal role in man's gradual perfection. But at the present moment, the conditions have grown too complex to be masterfully handled by any of them. Being human in their origin they possess all the limitations of human nature and, as they stand today, cannot aid man in his spiritual ascent or solve his ever-growing problems. Some of these pursuits like religion have become obsolete and have lost their essential value due to the advent of this new gnostic power. Some others have been considerably distorted due to wrong usage, like economics or politics. Even altruism or philanthropy cannot aid man in the long run, for they are mere palliatives meant to redress temporarily some physical ills, but do not bring any lasting remedy for his fundamental problems nor aid him in his spiritual progress. That is, these factors tackle man from without rather than from within. An inner change alone can alter outer conditions; no

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

lasting progress can come from mere external improvements. A true progress is an integral progress, covering all the facets of human conditions and consciousness. But it must proceed from within outwards. This is now our true need.

Opening oneself to the new light is then the first requisite of the spiritual change. Before this could take place certain basic psychological preparations are necessary, otherwise it would be impossible for one to turn to the life of the Spirit. There must be a sincere turning away from materialism, a new orientation of the consciousness. That does not necessarily mean that we are preaching the way of escapism in the line of Adwaita Vedanta. On the contrary, instead of the dominance of matter for the sake of matter, we aim at a conquest of matter by the power of the spirit. If this has to come about, we must turn away from materialism as a guiding principle in our life, thought and values.

Opening signifies a reliance; it also means an exclusive faith in a reality other than our own limited ego-centric existence. Following the modern trend we have now fallen into the vicious habit of stressing on the cult of egoistic self-determination and freedom. This has only made us narrow and self-centred. Our true freedom lies not in the assertion of our ego and its demands but in realising our true psychological centre, our soul, which is really free because it relies exclusively on the Divine and has no attachments that are common to life and mind. Thus, when we realise that not our ego but the Divine is our master, we take a large stride in our progress. We then get faith, which comes from the soul and is based not on logical inference or pragmatic proof, but on direct intuition which is greater than mere intellectual cognition. This reliance and this faith are essential for an opening to our true self and reality.

Our opening would bring to us, as a direct result, the following psychological changes: an organisation of all the parts of the being around the psychic nucleus; a definite choice to take up a higher life in place of the common purblind life; a total sincerity which makes possible the stationing of all parts of consciousness at the highest level attained by the being at the moment; and an entire self-giving to the principles of light, felicity and knowledge.

Today man in general, in spite of his intellectual growth, is a disorganised being, without any permanent station in any part of his nature, which could be called his psychological centre. He moves from different strata of mind and life and physico-psychological centres as he is impelled at the moment. He does not make any effort to rise above this condition, due to mental lethargy and psychological unpreparedness. What is most needed is that he must find his true self and make it his guiding light. The discovery of the soul is by itself a subtle process needing an unsullied purity, a deep sensitiveness and a total turning away from gross materialism. The soul, as an entity,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

is shy and to call it forth and make it express itself constantly needs patience and will. But once it has come forth, there is no worry for the individual. The Divine himself, through the agency of the soul, takes the entire control of the being. The burden of life, the problems of existence, the riddles of doubts, the whip-lashes of desires, the unpredictability of moods and emotions, all disappear. Love in its true character reveals itself; knowledge, not by the dry and unsure process of ratiocination, but by direct intuitive perception becomes a common fact; there is no problem of choice, of will, of ways of actions and methods. All doubts and perplexities are effaced.

Consequently sincerity becomes a diamond-white reality to the being. Man lives in the highest state of consciousness progressively attained by him and there are no fluctuations in the level of consciousness.

All acts become acts of sacrifice. All movements, thoughts, ideations, emotions and volitions are no longer independent movements but movements of self-offering. The impulsions come from above, and are expressed as different formations of thoughts, ideations and will and from the side of the instrument these are consciously received and offered back to the source from which they originated.

It may be argued that such a long and difficult programme cannot be for the masses who are too unconscious to follow any arduous path of discipline. But let us not forget some cardinal points. The need of the hour is a turning towards the Spirit resulting in a total reversal of the normal consciousness. This would require some extraordinary labour for the individual. But we are, let us not forget, in an extraordinary moment of history, when even a little effort could bring forth enormous results. For this is THE HOUR OF GOD. Thus if we really mean business, here is an opportunity of a lifetime, rather an opportunity in a millennium. Secondly, this turning is not for all; it is meant for a few handful, who have by their conscious efforts and the Divine's Grace a vision and premonition of the truth that is now manifesting here. This small nucleus shall be the forerunner of a new age. Lastly, no human consciousness or effort can bring about this change. It is the Divine Grace alone which can, if we open ourselves to it, do all for us.

In conclusion, let us remark, this is an age of action and not of deliberations and theories. We need swift, effective action; we need a sure unconquerable will; we need a true and dynamic spirituality that can reshape our life and our entire consciousness. We need most of all a receptivity to the invasion of the coming future whose insistent steps are already on us. For, on the few who are awake and are eager to serve the Truth depends the future progress of humanity. Let us never forget that the past cannot help us to progress. It can only retard our growth. Our existence lies in advancement and our destiny is in the Noon of God to come.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The Hand of light descends, a ray of God
Changing the course of things, the tide of the stars;
The feet of fire leap from the unmeasured height,
A gold-white avalanche of naked force;
Its tread is the sweep of the whirlwinds and floods;
Its march shall change the face of human days,
Its wonder path the way of the all-consuming day.

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"The boon that we have asked from the Supreme is the greatest that the Earth can ask from the Highest, the change that is most difficult to realise, the most exacting in its conditions. It is nothing less than the descent of the supreme Truth and Power into Matter, the supramental established in the material plane and consciousness and the material world and an integral transformation down to the very principle of Matter. Only a supreme Grace can effect this miracle.

"The supreme Power has descended into the most material consciousness but it has stood there behind the density of the physical veil, demanding before manifestation, before its great open workings can begin, that the conditions of the supreme Grace shall be there, real and effective.

"A total surrender, an exclusive self-opening to the divine influence, a constant and integral choice of the Truth and rejection of the falsehood, these are the only conditions made. But these must be fulfilled entirely, without reserve, without any evasion or pretence, simply and sincerely down to the most physical consciousness and its workings."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 46.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWELFTH SEMINAR

13 August 1967

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Sri Aurobindo and the New Age"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

Since the creation of the New Age, the Age of the Supramental Truth, was the central mission of Sri Aurobindo's life and since the advent of that Age is now imminent, the subject chosen by the Mother for this Seminar is of paramount importance at the present moment. It is especially so because Sri Aurobindo's birthday, the 15th August, is very close. We shall, therefore, in this Seminar, try to present some salient ideas on the subject with the hope that they will prove helpful to you to have a clear understanding of some important issues related to it.

Before calling the other speakers to deliver their speeches, I shall make a few observations as an introduction to the subject. I propose, however, to speak more about Sri Aurobindo himself as the creator of the New Age than about the New Age itself.

*

Evolution is a cyclic movement progressing by a succession of stages or epochs. In this succession certain stages are marked by such great and radical changes that they can be spoken of as new ages in comparison to the preceding ones that recede in the past. There have been a number of such new ages in the past. At the present moment, we are witnessing the birth of one more new age which, because of its unique significance for the human race, is new in a very special sense.

The cyclic movement of evolution is normally worked out by universal Nature secretly moved by God from behind the veil of the apparent process. But during the periods of radical transitions, when a new age has to be brought to birth, this secret veiled action of God is not sufficient. His direct unveiled intervention in Nature's working is needed. God himself has to incarnate upon earth in a human body to prepare, manifest and establish each new age in evolution. Nature by herself cannot do this by her normal working.

It is for this reason that God manifests as an Avatar in a human body upon earth age after age — *sambhavāmi yuge yuge*, as Krishna says in the Gita. The purpose and function of the Avatar is to lead the evolution to a higher stage, to create a new age in terrestrial history. As Sri Aurobindo observes: "Avatarhood would have little meaning if it were not connected with the evolution."[1]

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), pp. 401-2.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

A special incarnation of the supreme Divine therefore presides over the advent of each new age in earthly evoution. The forms of the successive incarnations vary according to the conditions and the needs of the new age that is to be created, but they are all forms of the same supreme Divine, the Lord, in increasing degrees of His manifesting power.

*

The New Age whose birth we are now witnessing is the Age of the Supramental Truth. To prepare and establish it here upon earth the Lord came incarnated as Sri Aurobindo. But He is the same Supreme Lord who had also repeatedly incarnated before in one form or another to prepare and establish all the new ages in the past evolutionary history of the earth. It is for this reason that the Mother says:

"Since the beginning of earth history, Sri Aurobindo has always presided over the great earthly transformations, under one form or another, one name or another."[1]

And the same will be true of all the future new ages that will come after the Supramental Age, for surely it is not the end of the Lord's manifestation upon earth. Again as the Mother says:

"The Lord is Eternal and Infinite. Even when the supramental will be fully realised upon earth the Lord will infinitely exceed this realisation which will be followed by other manifestations of the Lord *ad infinitum*."[2]

We may therefore say that though it is the same Lord who repeatedly incarnates upon earth to create successive new ages, yet each time He reveals a greater glory of His Power than before. Because of this we can say that each new Avatar in the evolutionary progression is greater than and superior to the other Avatars preceding him. Thus if we take the ten Avatars of the Hindu tradition, each new Avatar in this succession should be considered to be superior to those who preceded him because he manifested a plane of consciousness higher than the planes manifested by them. Buddha and Krishna, for example, should be considered greater Avatars than Vamana and Parashurama.

So also if we admit that the supramental consciousness which Sri Aurobindo incarnated, and to manifest which he came upon earth, is greater than the spiritual consciousness which Buddha or Krishna or any other

[1] *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo.*
[2] *Sri Aurobindo Circle*, Twenty-First Number, 1965.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Avatar manifested in the past, then surely we must accept Sri Aurobindo as the greatest of all Avatars in earth's history.

This point needs to be specially stressed because, even though it is obvious, some people find it extremely hard to accept it. Even those, who believe that Sri Aurobindo realised the divine consciousness, often consider him to be only a great yogi but not an Avatar. And even some of those who accept him as an Avatar find it difficult to accept his superiority to some other Avatar of the past whom they worship as their God. But if it is admitted that the Supreme Lord does not reveal His full glory in His one incarnation, but progressively in a series of His incarnations, then what objection can there be to accepting that each new incarnation manifests a greater degree of His glory and therefore is superior to the other incarnations that preceded him? If Rama and Krishna are accepted as greater Avatars than Vamana and Parashurama, why should Sri Aurobindo not be accepted as a greater Avatar than Rama and Krishna or Buddha and Christ?

Let me quote the Mother's words in this context:

"In the eternity of becoming each Avatar is only the announcer, the forerunner of a more perfect future realisation.

"And yet men have always the tendency to deify the Avatar of the past in opposition to the Avatar of the future.

"Now again Sri Aurobindo has come announcing to the world the realisation of tomorrow; and again his message meets with the same opposition as of all those who preceded him.

"But tomorrow will prove the truth of what he revealed and his work will be done." [1]

*

To those who feel shocked at the idea that Sri Aurobindo incarnated in himself and revealed to the world a Truth greater than that revealed by any of the Avatars, one can only point out the following somewhat piquant remarks made by Sri Aurobindo himself on this issue:

"As for the past seers, they don't trouble me. If going beyond the experiences of past seers and sages is so shocking, each new seer or sage in turn has done that shocking thing — Buddha, Shankara, Chaitanya, etc. all did that wicked act. If not, what was the necessity of their starting new philosophies, religions, schools of yoga? If they were merely verifying and meekly repeating the lives and experiences of past seers and sages without bringing the world some new thing, why all that stir and pother? Of course, you may say, they were simply explaining the old truth but in the right way — but this

[1] *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

would mean that nobody had explained or understood it rightly before.... Or you may say that all the new sages... e.g., Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva were each merely repeating the same blessed thing as all the past seers and sages had repeated with an unwearied monotony before them. Well, well, but why repeat it in such a way that each 'gives the lie' to the others? Truly, this shocked reverence for the past is a wonderful and fearful thing! After all, the Divine is infinite and the unrolling of the Truth may be an infinite process or at least, if not quite so much, yet with some room for new discovery and new statement, even perhaps new achievement, not a thing in a nutshell cracked and its contents exhausted once for all by the first seer or sage, while the others must religiously crack the same nutshell all over again, each tremblingly fearful not to give the lie to the 'past' seers and sages." [1]

This same point is made by Sri Aurobindo in another passage:

"The traditions of the past are very great in their own place, in the past, but I do not see why we should merely repeat them and not go farther. In the spiritual development of the consciousness upon earth the great past ought to be followed by a greater future." [2]

*

It needs however to be said that though Sri Aurobindo was fully aware that the supramental consciousness which he incarnated was the greatest spiritual consciousness ever manifested in earth's history, he himself never cared to proclaim or argue about his own greatness in comparison with the past Avatars. To a person who had a dispute on this point with another person, he simply said:

"You can't expect me to argue about my own spiritual greatness in comparison with Krishna's.... X thinks I am superior in greatness, you think there can be nothing greater than Krishna: each is entitled to have his own view or feeling, whether it is itself right or not. It can be left there." [3]

Supremely great though he was, his utter indifference to any question of personal greatness is obvious also from his following remarks:

"It is not for personal greatness that I am seeking to bring down the Supermind. I care nothing for greatness or littleness in the human sense. I

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), pp. 92-93.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[3] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 136-37.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

am seeking to bring some principle of inner Truth, Light, Harmony, Peace into the earth-consciousness; I see it above and know what it is — I feel it ever gleaming down on my consciousness from above and I am seeking to make it possible for it to take up the whole being into its own native power, instead of the nature of man continuing to remain in half-light, half-darkness. I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth evolution. If greater men than myself have not had this vision and this ideal before them, that is no reason why I should not follow my Truth-sense and Truth-vision. If human reason regards me as a fool for trying to do what Krishna did not try, I do not in the least care. There is no question of X or Y or anybody else in that. It is a question between the Divine and myself — whether it is the Divine Will or not, whether I am sent to bring that down or open the way for its descent or at least make it more possible or not. Let all men jeer at me if they will or all Hell fall upon me if it will for my presumption, — I go on till I conquer or perish. This is the spirit in which I seek the Supermind, no hunting for greatness for myself or others." [1]

*

The New Age thus is a creation of Sri Aurobindo in a specially personal sense because without his personal intervention as its Avatar and his lifelong preoccupation with preparing and manifesting it upon earth it could not have been created at all. It is he who conceived it, fostered it, laboured for it against tremendous odds and stupendous difficulties and sacrificed everything, including even his body, for its successful advent.

If it is asked why he, being the Avatar of the omnipotent supramental Power, had to labour and struggle and suffer and sacrifice to manifest it upon earth, the answer can best be given in his own words:

"For the Leader of the Way in a work like ours has not only to bring down and represent and embody the Divine, but to represent too the ascending element in humanity and to bear the burden of humanity to the full and experience, not in a mere play or Lila but in grim earnest, all the obstruction, difficulty, opposition, baffled and hampered and only slowly victorious labour which are possible on the Path." [2]

In spite of these extreme difficulties, Sri Aurobindo never shrank from the herculean labour required for bringing down the supramental Truth upon earth. His love for humanity was so fathomless and vast that he consi-

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 143-44.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 464.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

dered no price that may have to be paid for its sake as too great. Not only did he devote his whole life single-pointedly to this work of central importance for earth and humanity, but finally in an act of supreme sacrifice he gave away even his own body. But the giving up of his body did not mean the giving up of his work; it only meant its continuation from a different plane, but with greater urgency and intensity.

As a fruition of this unrelenting labour, the Supermind manifested in the subtle layers of the earth in February 1956 and from there it has been incessantly working to manifest in the external physical life of the world. The time has now come when this manifestation is imminent.

*

At this very moment when the advent of the supramental Truth is imminent, we are confronted with a world-situation which seems to us most paradoxical and perplexing because it is quite the contrary of our normal expectations. We expect that the advent of the supramental Truth should bring into the world a great outburst of Light, Joy, Peace, Harmony and Love. But instead of that what we actually find happening now is a tremendous upsurge of dark and violent forces of falsehood and evil. The world-conditions at the present moment are increasingly becoming so chaotic and blindly destructive that they have created a widespread feeling of acute anxiety and distress. Some great catastrophe, which may engulf the whole world, seems not a far too distant prospect to most people. Faced with such a formidable and overwhelming situation, they find it extremely hard to believe that the birth of a new age of some great Light and Truth is imminent.

But if we have a true understanding of the working of the world-forces, which always precede the birth of a new age in evolution, we shall not only not feel bewildered and perplexed in face of the present adverse conditions but would rather see in them a clear sign of the very near approach of the new age upon earth. This phenomenon of the uprush of extreme darkness just before the advent of a new Light is a thing well-known since ancient times to the mystics who have an inner perception of the operation of the occult world-forces attending upon the birth of a new age in earth evolution. Sri Aurobindo has spoken about it a number of times. I quote here a passage from *The Human Cycle* which is very significant in the present context:

"God works all his miracles by an evolution of secret possibilities which have been long prepared, at least in their elements, and in the end by a rapid bringing of all to a head, a throwing together of the elements so that in their fusion they produce a new form and name of things and reveal a new spirit. Often the decisive turn is preceded by an apparent emphasising and raising

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to their extreme of things which seem the very denial, the most uncompromising opposite of the new principle and the new creation. Such an evolution of the elements of a spiritualised society is that which a subjective age makes at least possible, and if at the same time it raises to the last height of active power things which seem the very denial of such a potentiality, that need be no index of a practical impossibility of the new birth, but on the contrary may be the sign of its approach or at the lowest a strong attempt at achievement."[1]

The same point is made by Sri Aurobindo in a letter written to a sadhak:

"The extreme acuteness of your difficulties is due to the Yoga having come down against the bed-rock of Inconscience which is the fundamental basis of all resistance in the individual and in the world to the victory of the Spirit and the Divine Work that is leading toward that victory. The difficulties themselves are general in the Ashram as well as in the outside world.... All that, however acute, is a temporary phenomenon for which those who know anything about the workings of the world-energy and the workings of the Spirit were prepared. I myself foresaw that this worst would come, the darkness of night before the dawn; therefore I am not discouraged. I know what is preparing behind the darkness and can see and feel the first signs of its coming. Those who seek for the Divine have to stand firm and persist in their seeking; after a time, the darkness will fade and begin to disappear and the Light will come."[2]

*

Remembering this assurance of Sri Aurobindo, we must refuse to be dismayed or perplexed by the chaotic conditions of the world at the present moment. Even if they become still worse, as they may, — for the shadow of the third world war is still looming over our head, — even if sheer darkness may seem to engulf the world, we must remain firm in our faith in Sri Aurobindo's assurance that it is only a passing shadow which will soon disappear and the bright sun of Truth will emerge victoriously from behind it. If the darkness seems to become too overwhelming, we must remember that it is so because the Light that is emerging is also unique and unparalleled in the world's history. According to the Indian tradition, in each evolutionary cycle, the Satya Yuga or the Age of Truth is preceded and prepared by the Kali Yuga or the Age of Chaos and Destruction. We may say that since the Light which the new Satya Yuga will manifest is the greatest ever manifested

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 172.
[2] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 169-70.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

on earth, the darkness of the Kali Yuga through which we are now passing is also the worst in its blackness ever experienced by humanity. But, however black it may be, it is only a passing cloud. Inevitably it must recede and give place to the splendour of Truth which is pressing from behind to emerge.

There is thus no reason to entertain a pessimistic attitude towards the near advent of the New Age, however distressing the world-conditions may temporarily become.

*

In the final count our faith in the advent of the New Age must rest upon our faith in Sri Aurobindo himself. I have said before that the creation of the New Age in earth's evolution is a work for which Sri Aurobindo himself is personally responsible. Our faith in the successful issue of his work must therefore ultimately rest upon our conception of and faith in Sri Aurobindo himself. If we believe that he was not merely a great personality or a great yogi; if we believe that he was the Supreme Lord incarnated in a human body with the single mission of establishing the supramental Truth upon earth to create a New Age in human evolution; if we further believe that the Will of the Supreme Lord that Sri Aurobindo wielded can *never* be defeated or frustrated by any power of darkness or falsehood however formidable it may be, then we must remain absolutely firm in our faith in the victory of His Will and unperturbed even if the world-conditions which are now extremely bad may become still worse.

And still if any shadow of doubt or diffidence may sometimes try to cloud our faith, we must expel it immediately, remembering these words of the Mother:

"The mighty work of Change taken up by Sri Aurobindo is going to culminate in success. For that indeed is a fact; there is not a shadow of doubt as to the issue of the work we have in hand. It is no mere experiment but an inevitable manifestation of the Supramental.... The transformation is going to be: nothing will ever stop it, nothing will frustrate the decree of the Omnipotent. Cast away, therefore, all diffidence and weakness, and resolve to endure bravely awhile before the great day arrives when the long battle turns into an everlasting victory."[1]

[1] *Words of the Mother*, Third Series (1951), pp. 29-30.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY OSCAR LÄSSER

Let us first remember with gratitude that we have the immense privilege to live at the threshold of a New Age, the privilege to assist in the birth of a new world, and to witness the emergence of a new race, the race of the Sons of God.

In the words of the Mother: "We are in a very special situation, extremely special which has had no precedent. We are attending on the birth of a new world, altogether young, altogether weak — weak not in its essence, but in its external manifestation — not yet recognised, not yet felt, denied by most; but it is there, it is there endeavouring to grow and quite sure of the result. Yet, the road to reach there is a new road, that has never before been traced; none went by that way, none did that. It is a beginning, a universal beginning. Therefore it is an adventure absolutely unexpected and unforeseeable."[1]

The birthday of this new world was February 29, 1956, when the Mother announced: "Lord, Thou hast willed and I execute. A new light breaks upon the earth, a new world is born. The things that were promised are fulfilled."

Man has now the opportunity to outgrow his ignorant and fumbling humanity and to manifest progressively the supramental or the God-consciousness, which sees things in their totality and Truth and does not depend any more on analytical reason as the governor of life.

Few might have noticed the advent of the new age, for which a refined occult perception is at present still necessary, but I think every rational individual will agree that man and his world have to change if they want to survive. Material Science has advanced much quicker than the consciousness of humanity, with the result that the Damocles' sword of self-destruction hangs constantly over our heads. The way out of this impasse is a change of man's consciousness, i.e., the development of his hidden soul-potentialities. The Mother has told us bluntly:

"The future of the Earth depends on a Change of Consciousness.

"The only hope for the future is in a change of man's consciousness and the change is bound to come.

"But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances."[2]

Pessimists, knowing only man and not God, might look at the birth of

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1957, p. 97, 99.
[2] Message to the World Conference of the Sri Aurobindo Society, August 1964.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the new world or the kingdom of God on earth as a vain chimera or a utopian dream. However, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo have told us repeatedly that the supramental creation will follow the present one as inevitably as day follows night, and that this change is being enacted now. But one might still ask:

"If a world-war breaks out, it may not only destroy the major portion of humanity but even make living conditions for those who survive impossible due to the effects of the nuclear fall-out....Will it not affect the advent of the supramental Truth and the New Race upon earth?"

To this question the Mother replied:

"All these are mental speculations and once you enter in the domain of mental imaginations there is no end to the problems and their solutions. But all that does not bring you one step closer to the truth.

"The safest and most healthy attitude of the mind is like this one: We have been told in a positive and definite way that the supramental creation will follow the present one; so, whatever is in preparation for the future must be the circumstances needed for this advent whatever they are... and as we are unable to foresee correctly what these circumstances are, it is better to keep silent about them."[1]

So let us remember that the New Age or, in other terms, the Supramental Creation, the Kingdom of God on earth, is already born and is bound to manifest more and more until the Victory is reached, whatever may happen. On the 21 February 1967 the Mother gave us the following assuring words: "The world forces will act toward the supramental Manifestation from now onwards." On another occasion she said: "It [Supermanhood] is no longer a hope, it has become a certainty. Only the time necessary for the realisation will be more or less long according to our individual effort, our concentration, our good will — and the importance we attach to the fact."[2]

*

In the second part of this talk I would like to introduce you to Auroville, the planned international city of dawn, the beacon and example for the coming of the spiritual age. To give you technical and material details about the Auroville project would be outside the scope of this Seminar, and I shall therefore give you simply a short spiritual background history of the project.

[1] Letter dated 29-1-1967. See *Sri Aurobindo Circle*, Twenty-Third Number, 1967.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1957, p. 101.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Already in 1912 we note in the Mother's writings the idea of an ideal town. I quote: "This, therefore, is the most useful work to be done....Collectively, to establish an ideal society in a propitious spot for the flowering of the new race, the race of the Sons of God."[1] In 1930 the Mother said: "Once, however, the connection [between the Supermind and the material being] is made, it must have its effect in the outward world in the form of a new creation, beginning with a model town and ending with a perfect world."[2]

The New Year message which the Mother gave for 1959 indicates that this connection is now a fact:

"At the very bottom of the inconscience most hard and rigid and narrow and stifling I struck upon an almighty spring that cast me up forthwith into a formless limitless Vast vibrating with the seeds of a new world."[3]

So at the end of 1964 the Mother informed us that work on the project of a model town, which she named Auroville, could be started. At the beginning of 1966 she said: "Auroville is going well and becomes more and more real, but its realisation does not advance in the habitual manner, and it is more visible for the interior consciousness than for the exterior vision."[4]

Now the project has progressed to such an extent that a simple and moving inauguration ceremony could be held on the 28 February 1968. During the ceremony I could feel a very special atmosphere of peace, concord and unity. In fact I am convinced that this strong presence of the Consciousness made the ceremony the success it was. Symbolic earth from 124 countries and 23 Indian States was deposited in a lotus-shaped urn, and representatives from 63 countries participated. The Mother read out in her mantric voice the French text of the Charter of Auroville and of her inauguration message.

What are the conditions for living in this city of universal culture?

"From the psychological viewpoint, the required conditions are:

(1) To be convinced of the essential unity of mankind and the will to collaborate towards the material realisation of that unity;

(2) To have the will to collaborate in all that favours the future realisations. The material conditions will be worked out gradually according to the realisation."[5]

I myself have come to the firm conviction that the growth and realisation of Auroville is in the hands of the Divine who will direct the progress of His

[1] *Conversations* (1917), p. 1.
[2] *Words of the Mother*, Third Series (1951), p. 90.
[3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1959.
[4] [5] The Mother's messages to Auroville workers.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

town mainly through a guiding body of a small number of enlightened individuals, perfect instruments open to the Divine only, having an exceptional power of realisation.

Let us conclude with a glimpse into the future — the Mother's words on an ideal town:

"The plan came in all the details, but it is a plan which in its spirit and consciousness, does not at all conform to what is possible terrestrially now; yet in its most material manifestation, it was based on terrestrial conditions. It is the concept of an ideal town which would be the nucleus of an ideal country and which would have contacts, purely superficial and extremely limited in their effects, with the outside world. One must then already conceive — that however is possible — of a power sufficiently strong to be at the same time a protection against aggression or bad will (it would not be a most difficult protection to have) and against infiltration and admixture. But that one can conceive, if absolutely necessary. From the social point of view, from the point of view of organisation, from the point of view of the inner life, those are not problems. The problem is the relation with what is not supramentalised, to prevent the infiltration, the admixture, that is to say, to prevent the nucleus from falling back into a lower creation — the question is about a period of transition.

"All those who have given thought to the problem have always imagined something unknown to the rest of humanity, like a gorge in the Himalayas, for example, a place unknown to the rest of the world. But this is not a solution; it is not solution at all.

"No, the only solution is the occult power, but that already implies, before anything can be done that a certain number of individuals must have reached a great perfection of realisation. But it can be conceived that if this can be done, one can have a spot isolated in the midst of the outside world (there are no contacts, it is understood), a spot where everything would be exactly in its place, as an example. Each thing is exactly in its place, each person exactly in his place, each movement exactly in its place — and in its place in an ascending progressive movement without a relapse (that is to say, quite contrary to what happens in ordinary life). Naturally, that presupposes a kind of perfection, that presupposes a kind of unity, that presupposes that the different aspects of the Supreme can be manifested; and necessarily, an exceptional beauty, a total harmony and a power strong enough to hold the forces of Nature under submission. For example, even if this spot were surrounded by the forces of destruction, they would not have the power to act, the protection would be sufficient. All that requires utmost perfection in the individuals who would be the organisers of such a thing." [1]

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1961, pp. 25-27.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

"He has come to bid the earth to prepare for its luminous future."
THE MOTHER

Sri Aurobindo is the incarnation of the new age. In him we find embodied the new Truth that would manifest in life, thought, emotions, action, and every sphere of human existence. It is through him and by him that the age of the supramental manifestation has its birth. He is both its precursor and its daemon of creation and fulfilment. It is extremely difficult to do justice to him in the small compass of a speech. We would only trace the main points in an outline.

At the outset, let us make this initial statement to remove any misunderstanding. When we say Sri Aurobindo, it is not Sri Aurobindo alone as an isolated spiritual personality, a lone godhead like Krishna or Rama, but a Power who is amidst us along with the Divine Mother; their fusion and their spiritual oneness makes possible the total manifestation of the supramental Truth. They act simultaneously as one Power, one Consciousness and there is no division in their working and method. Keeping this fundamental unity in mind, we must approach and deal with the subject.

The advent of Sri Aurobindo is the beginning of a new age. He comes as an embodied promise of the greatest culmination the earth has ever seen. By his birth, a new era commenced in the history of earth's consciousness. As a result of his intense lifelong labour, sacrificing even the realisation in his body, he made possible the descent of the supramental Power into the earth consciousness. All his work, prior to this epoch-making event, was one of preparation of the ground. His field was the entire life of man, its growth and its evolution. A total victory, a change of the whole human consciousness was his unique goal. He would not accept as final any half-way house, or partial result, or intermediate stage. And all this he did not for himself, or for his glory, but because it was his divine mission upon earth.

At first he works from behind; but as his work progresses his presence comes more and more to the forefront. As he conquers newer ground, he comes closer to us, not as a vague presence, but as a guide, a friend, a master, who has made man's sadhana his own, man's development his own. We can no longer shut him away as an undefinable personality; we recognise him as an incarnation of a new Truth, who has made, by his descent, all past and its heritage obsolete. Sri Aurobindo thus is the precursor of a new age.

He reveals the path of yoga as an integral path of self-perfection and transformation. He departs from other prevalent yogas by giving to his yoga a new meaning and a new orientation, a new scope and a new fulfilment.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Because Sri Aurobindo's vision is all-embracing, his yoga too embraces all parts of the human consciousness down to the very physical; he brings all under the direct illumination of the Spirit and makes the entire field of man's being a salient ground of divine intervention and working. Some may consider this path to be eclectic. But it is not a patchwork of so many divergent systems, but a true synthesis of all other ways attempted by man at different times. The past yogas have become obsolete due to their one-sided approach and method; the present age demands a total approach, an integral method, an all-sided fulfilment. Sri Aurobindo fulfils the crying need of the hour of man's surpassing his limits and his slavery to life and mind and his ego. He shows us that unless all parts of the being are brought under the light of the Spirit the next step towards a greater evolution cannot take place. For this end, he employs a system in which Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana have their place but in effect it surpasses them all. It is the yoga of the future, it is the path of the integral transformation. In it the surrender to the supreme Shakti is as important as personal tapasya, and dynamism and status have equal place; in one word, the realisation is not confined to one part of the being but to the whole human person, who with all his facets, realises the truth, makes it a part of his thinking, willing, feeling and sensations. Such a goal is not for the man clinging to the past, it is for the man who has the future as his goal. The yoga of Sri Aurobindo is a living challenge to exceed ourselves and meet the unexpected.

The modern theory of evolution is an important step in philosophy which has its scientific bearing in biology as well. Evolution, in the sense of a graded creation, was a concept known to the ancient world. But today, it has become very intricate in its bearing and significance. In spite of this intricacy, the philosophical concept has not tallied with the biological findings. In Sri Aurobindo there is no discrepancy between these and he reveals that biology only proves that a greater ascent of man is a logical step. This future superman is not a utopian dream, it is a logical culmination of nature's perfection. But according to Sri Aurobindo, previous to the first step of evolution, there is involution which makes evolution possible, a fact which no philosopher from Heraclitus to Teilhard de Chardin has seized or expressed. If mind and life were not already involved in matter, they could not have evolved out of the material base; so too the Supermind, which is the next principle to evolve beyond mind, is already involved in mind, life and matter.

In Sri Aurobindo we have the philosophy of the future. Here philosophy goes beyond its rational scope and, fused with spiritual experience and realisation, assumes a new form, substance and logical system. That is, it is a greater and wider philosophy where the whole problems of fate, freewill, soul, nature, life and a host of others are seen, not with the eyes of a dialetical logician, but with the eyes of the seer, whose span and depth are greater.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

In psychology, Sri Aurobindo brings us a new light, making obsolete the past and current trends. His discoveries of the deeper and higher levels of consciousness make the work of even the foremost modern psychologists insignificant in comparison. He distinguishes the various layers of the complex human personality and consciousness and reveals their processes and functions. Lastly, he shows their future potentialities when they will be transformed and become the instruments of the spirit. This psychological knowledge makes his yoga more precise and subtle and lends fullness to man's ascent to self-perfection.

In literature, Sri Aurobindo has given us a poetry which does not belong to this age or to any age in the past. His literary criticism always points to the future. What is new in his poetry is not so much the form as the substance, the significance and the value. His best poetry comes down from a plane of consciousness as yet untapped by any poet of the past or present. Each line of his epic *Savitri* is an adventure into the unknown, a rare and unforgettable experience in beauty, music, felicity and power. He unveils to us greater worlds of Truth, of harmony, of peace. He also makes us travel through many supraphysical domains of life, mind and spirit. Here all is revealed as true and luminous with the God-touch. Through poetry, Sri Aurobindo comes closest to us with his message of the unborn and the future. Here the rebel is more than ever a creator, an architect of new forms and of a new world that is yet to be born.

Sri Aurobindo gives to sociology, politics and allied sciences a new orientation which is at once global and profound. He lays bare the growth of the soul of individual and nation with their problems and solutions. He interprets history in the light of the Spirit and shows the real meaning in the curves of its cyclic development. He also shows us the real significance of religion and its role in the path of man's perfection. He defines for us what true civilisation is and the significance of barbarism. At every step he reveals himself as the seer, the prophet and the Avatar of the new age that is now coming.

Sri Aurobindo is not a mere armchair critic or philosopher. What he reveals in his writings, he manifests actually in his own life and body as well. He lives the truth of the Spirit and, at each step, he unveils to us that preaching and practice are one. That is why he does not neglect the body and its perfection. For the true plenitude to come, we cannot shut out the body which is the earthly base of human personality. In his concept of integral education, therefore, all have equal importance, the education of the soul, of the mind, of the life and the body.

Let us not forget that the new age that is just being born, is the result of his unique labour and sacrifice, the greatness and magnitude of which cannot be imagined by men. He ushers a new age of dynamic spirituality which is all embracing and encompasses in its scope all the spheres of human life and

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

endeavour. Nothing would be left out which is true or which serves the essential truth of the life and the Spirit.

In this new age:

> "The Spirit's eyes shall look through Nature's eyes,
> The Spirit's force shall occupy Nature's force.
> This world shall be God's visible garden-house,
> The earth shall be a field and camp of God."[1]

READINGS FROM THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

Q: *You spoke of Sri Aurobindo's birth as 'eternal' in the history of the universe. What exactly was meant by 'eternal'?*

A: "The sentence can be understood in four different ways on four ascending planes of consciousness:

"1. Physically, the consequences of the birth will be of eternal importance in the world.

"2. Mentally, it is a birth that will be eternally remembered in the universal history.

"3. Psychically, a birth that recurs for ever from age to age upon earth.

"4. Spiritually, the birth of the Eternal upon earth."

(*The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*) THE MOTHER

***

"We must not be bewildered by appearances. Sri Aurobindo has not left us. Sri Aurobindo is here, as living and as present as ever and it is left to us to realise his work with all the sincerity, eagerness and concentration necessary."

15.12.1950

(*Ibid.*) THE MOTHER

***

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), pp. 707-8.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"To express our gratitude to Sri Aurobindo we can do nothing better than to be a living demonstration of his teaching."
14.12.1950

(*The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*) THE MOTHER

***

"By slow degrees the Supramental is exerting its influence; now one part of the being and now another feels the embrace or the touch of its divinity; but when it comes down in all its self-existent power, a supreme radical change will seize the whole nature. We are moving nearer and nearer the hour of its complete triumph. Once the world-conditions are ready the full descent will take place carrying everything before it. Its presence will be unmistakable, its force will brook no resistance, doubts and difficulties will not torture you any longer. For the Divine will stand manifest — unveiled in its total perfection. I do not, however, mean to say that the whole world will at once feel its presence or be transformed; but I do mean that a part of humanity will know and participate in its descent — say this little world of ours here. From there the transfiguring grace will most effectively radiate. And fortunately for the aspirants, that successful future will materialise for them in spite of all the obstacles set in its way by unregenerate human nature!"

(*Words of the Mother*, Third Series, pp. 91-2.) THE MOTHER

***

"If the light that is being born increases, if the number of individuals who seek to realise the possibility in themselves and in the world grows large and they get nearer the right way, then the Spirit who is here in man, now a concealed divinity, a developing light and power, will descend more fully as the Avatar of a yet unseen and unguessed Godhead from above into the soul of mankind and into the great individualities in whom the light and power are the strongest. There will then be fulfilled the change that will prepare the transition of human life from its present limits into those larger and purer horizons; the earthly evolution will have taken its great impetus upward and accomplished the revealing step in a divine progression of which the birth of thinking and aspiring man from the animal nature was only an obscure preparation and a far-off promise."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, pp. 253-54.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"When superman is born as Nature's king
His presence shall transfigure Matter's world:
He shall light up Truth's fire in Nature's night,
He shall lay upon the earth Truth's greater law;
Man too shall turn towards the Spirit's call.
Awake to his hidden possibility,
Awake to all that slept within his heart
And all that Nature meant when earth was formed
And the Spirit made this ignorant world his home,
He shall aspire to Truth and God and Bliss.
Interpreter of a diviner law
And instrument of a supreme design
The higher kind shall lean to lift up man.
Man shall desire to climb to his own heights.
The truth above shall wake a nether truth;
Even the dumb earth become a sentient force.
The Spirit's tops and Nature's base shall draw
Near to the secret of their separate truth
And know each other as one deity.
The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.
Then man and superman shall be at one
And all the earth become a single life.
Even the multitude shall hear the Voice
And turn to commune with the Spirit within
And strive to obey the high spiritual law:
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,
Humanity awake to deepest self,
Nature the hidden godhead recognise.
Even the many shall some answer make
And bear the splendour of the Divine's rush
And his impetuous knock at unseen doors.
A heavenlier passion shall upheave men's lives,
Their mind shall share in the ineffable gleam,
Their heart shall feel the ecstasy and the fire,
Earth's bodies shall be conscious of a soul;
Mortality's bond-slaves shall unloose their bonds,
Mere men into spiritual beings grow
And see awake the dumb divinity.
Intuitive beams shall touch the nature's peaks,
A revelation stir the nature's depths;
The Truth shall be the leader of their lives,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Truth shall dictate their thought and speech and act,
They shall feel themselves lifted nearer to the sky,
As if a little lower than the gods.
For knowledge shall pour down its radiant streams
And even darkened mind quiver with new life
And kindle and burn with the Ideal's fire
And turn to escape from mortal ignorance.
The frontiers of the Ignorance shall recede,
More and more souls shall enter into light,
Minds lit, inspired, the occult summoner hear
And lives blaze with a sudden inner flame
And hearts grow enamoured of divine delight
And human wills tune to the divine will,
These separate selves the Spirit's oneness feel,
These senses of heavenly sense grow capable,
The flesh and nerves of a strange ethereal joy
And mortal bodies of immortality.
A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell
And take the charge of breath and speech and act
And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns
And every feeling a celestial thrill.
Often a lustrous inner dawn shall come
Lighting the chambers of the slumbering mind;
A sudden bliss shall run through every limb
And Nature with a mightier Presence fill.
Thus shall the earth open to divinity
And common natures feel the wide uplift,
Illumine common acts with the Spirit's ray
And meet the deity in common things.
Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
The Spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the life divine."

(*Savitri*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 29, pp. 709-11.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THIRTEENTH SEMINAR

26 November 1967

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"The new outlook on education."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: What should be the guiding principles of the new ideal of education?

Truth

Harmony

Liberty.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THE NEW OUTLOOK ON EDUCATION

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

Education is indispensable and, in fact, inescapable in life. Whether it is from Nature herself, or through daily events and happenings of life, or by conscious will and effort, we receive constant education all through our life, from the cradle to the grave. The whole of terrestrial life and existence provides us with a vast and varied field and opportunity for our education and progress. There is no end to the marvels of creation and, consequently, there is no end to our education.

Education through direct experience is by far the best that can be conceived of. And, in fact, the best light and guide for this purpose lies within oneself. And the real aim of education is nothing but to progressively reveal this inner light and guide, the soul, our psychic being. Since each individual projects a different aspect of the One Reality or Truth, to bring out one's own truth of being and live it in actual life, forming, so to say, a diversified unity is the very essence of true education.

So, the basic problem of life is the problem of education. Only if the education is correctly canalised can the life be truly successful. Needless to say, we do not speak of material success which is transient. What really matters is the success or progress of the soul in life, even though it may appear to be a failure from the material point of view.

Of late, the problem of education seems to have gained priority over all other problems of life. This is significant, because on a true and proper education depends the real worth, the true outflowering of an individual.

Education must be consistent with the aim of life. And the true aim of life is the progressive growth of consciousness in its totality. So, true education must help us to elevate our consciousness on all the levels of our being, and to methodically develop our inner faculties, and bring out the latent potentialities of our being. That is to say, the true aim of education is to new-shape and refine the crude and raw stuff which our surface being and nature are, and reorientate them in the light of the Spirit so that all our thoughts, feelings and actions may perfectly express the inner divinity, our true personality. So it follows that the aim of integral education which seeks to impart an all-round development of our being is the same as that of the integral yoga.

In every age, the method of education has to be reshaped and recast according to the need of the hour to take another definitive step forward in the evolutionary development.

Ordinarily, people take the term "education" to connote academic edu-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

cation. To acquire the highest university degree or diploma is considered to be the crowning fulfilment of education. Now, academic education has, of course, its value. It is certainly necessary in order to train the mind properly, organise the intellect and develop the thinking capacity. All this, however, pertains to the outer aspect of the being, and that too of a part of the whole being. Academic education prepares at best the outer man or the man of society, whereas the aim of integral education is to shape and bring out the divine in man, the real person.

Behind the outer universe lie the vaster inner worlds with all their sublime profundities and wonderful vistas. The inner holds all the secrets of which the outer is only a faint projection. So, to discover and know the inner worlds, and unveil their mysteries and apply this inner truth and light in practical life should be the whole desideratum of true education.

Since our aim is spiritual fulfilment on a material basis, we shall have to shape our education accordingly. This makes it a necessity for us to become conscious of the different parts of our being for a systematic culture of all of them, and bring out the genius contained in each.

Physical education consists in making our body strong and healthy, supple and agile, beautiful and graceful by methodical exercises.

The education of the vital consists in building up a strong and noble character by controlling our desires and impulses. Aesthetic culture also forms part of the vital education. The fine arts are a great help towards awakening the aesthetic taste, the sense of beauty and harmony within us.

The education of the mind consists, in general, in making our intellect keen and quick, our thoughts coherent and organised. It is important to note that it is the appearance and descent of the principle of Mind in the earth-nature that has helped the evolutionary course to take a revolutionary turn in its progressive growth and manifestation. It is through the element of Mind that the psychic being urges the nature to reflect and concentrate and delve deep within, impels the being to discover the unknown, to approach the inaccessible and to attempt the apparently impossible. It is because of this mental principle that Science and Philosophy, Religion and Culture have gradually flourished in the earthly existence.

Now, we are not to pursue mechanically the education of these three instruments of the soul. It is not a routine work which has to be done. We must approach it in a different spirit, with a different consciousness, for achieving something deeper and higher. It is to purify and transform our instrumental consciousness and nature so that they may fully express our psychic personality. Our aim in every sphere should be a two-fold perfection, — the perfection from above and the perfection from below. The former refers to spiritual perfection, or the perfection of consciousness, whereas the latter refers to human perfection, or the perfection of the instruments.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The spiritual perfection will follow the discovery of the psychic being which one really is. The psychic being holds within it the key to all the secrets of the inner realm. Hence our outlook on education should be to bring the psychic being in front so that thereafter it can infallibly lead us to the perception and receptivity of true knowledge, inner beauty, love and harmony concealed in the silent depth of the being. So, true education should tend towards self-discovery and self-expression. This, naturally, is not at all an easy task. And if only one succeeds in this, one will automatically possess the key to the discovery of further secrets. What is essentially needed is personal will and effort besides a total surrender and openness to the Divine Mother. The Grace of the Mother can alone help us to achieve this difficult task.

Generally, mental or intellectual development is taken to be the limit attainable by man. But this, of course, cannot be the truth. Because there is no reason why evolutionary Nature should abruptly stop at this imperfect development of her instrument. The evolutionary spiral will certainly go on unrolling itself ever forward and, bursting the bounds of mind, will unfold the principle of Supermind in the earthly manifestation. Man will be surpassed by superman just as the animal has been surpassed by man. The age of reason and intellect is sure to be gradually replaced by the age of the Spirit.

In fact, even in our acquisition of the outer or the factual knowledge, we have reached a critical stage when we can advance no further without supra-rational knowledge. Science itself has arrived at a point where it is bewildered in its search for the real source or origin of the mysteries of the outer world. Science has perforce been led to believe that some secret Energy or Power must be the ultimate cause and source of Nature's marvels.

So, from any point of view, it is time now to direct our attention on education towards inner culture, for the discovery of our true self, and its expression in actual life in and through the instrumental nature. Till now, the educational method was directed towards preparing the mental being. It is time now that this method should be reshaped to mould the superman, the spiritual being.

This new outlook on education will be particularly helpful for those who have an inner urge or aspiration to exceed their present level of consciousness and grow ever higher, deeper and wider in consciousness.

Education cannot be imposed on anyone; nobody can be forced to learn. One must learn — anything, in any field of life — out of a joyous willingness. Then only it becomes truly dynamic, progressive and interesting.

So now, what should be the procedure? In ancient times, the Guru himself was also the teacher and guardian of his disciples; and so he could inwardly help his student-disciples by his own example and through his own spiritual influence. Here also, we have the unique opportunity of having the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Divine Mother herself to guide us in whatever problem we may come across. And it goes without saying, the teachers of our Centre of Education are availing themselves of this great opportunity, and receiving from the Mother abundant instructions, help and guidance regarding the proper method of education.

The Mother is in favour of free progress method. The children should be allowed complete freedom for a spontaneous inner growth and development. In fact, only in perfect freedom can any true progress be made. The Mother does not at all prefer the usual method of examination. She says that the teachers should come in psychological contact with the students, and give individual attention to each student. Naturally, all the students do not have the same mental development or inner preparedness. She also says that the classes should be made interesting and living and not mechanical.

Since we are not to ignore or neglect the outer life and existence, we should study all the subjects in accordance with our aptitude or bent of mind, but with a new outlook from the point of view of consciousness, with a different attitude of mind. It is truly for the sake of learning more and more, and not for passing examinations and acquiring diplomas, that we must look forward to true education.

Now comes the question of the teachers. They must endeavour to prove themselves to be the proper instruments and channels of the Mother to convey to the children the exact guidance needed for each, so that they may grow up spontaneously in their own line and develop their own genius. It is the duty of the teacher to awaken in the students the right impetus to be conscious of their own law or truth of being and express that in their actual life whether it is through study or work or any cultural activity. Now, real knowledge cannot be imparted to anybody. True knowledge is a thing innate in oneself and reveals itself by progressive self-unfoldment. The teacher is there just to help in rightly leading the students so that they do not digress from the right path.

Thus, a great responsibility devolves on the teachers themselves. Since they are to help the students they too should sincerely try to elevate their own consciousness in order to properly direct the students.

The Mother greatly stresses the need of mental silence for proper education. She says that if the teacher is true and sincere, he will be able, in ten minutes of attentive silence, to bring down from the domain of intuition a consciousness which will spread in his whole class. And then the work together with its results will be truly interesting. The teacher himself will also progress at the same time. She says that those who have genuine aspiration can get, in their inner silence, the necessary answer from a Consciousness absolutely living and active. And they can perform in six months the work of six years.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

She further says that all our pretension and ambition, our defects and weaknesses should be totally eliminated and replaced by a flaming aspiration for purity when we shall seek only the Supreme Consciousness as our sole objective in life; then there will be no need of schools or teachers or students or any other paraphernalia; life as a whole will seek to transform itself; that is the ideal.

The Mother has mentioned that the supramental education is the future mode of education meant for the divine humanity. This method or type of education will be of a completely different order, just the reverse of the present method.

At present we educate or train all the parts of our being, and gradually rise higher and higher in consciousness; there is a movement of ascent from below, whereas in the supramental education, the Force or Consciousness will take up within its fold and transform one by one all the states of our being starting from above and gradually descending downward culminating in the transformation of the physical itself.

Then, apart from the individual aspect, education must be considered in its collective aspect too. The individual does not belong to himself alone, he is a part of the collectivity. Though, of course, if each individual helps himself, the result will automatically cover the collectivity also; still the collectivity is a unit by itself; there is a group soul, as also mass psychology. So, collective or mass education is absolutely necessary to develop homogeneity in a group. Education of the collectivity helps to inculcate a spirit of fellow-feeling and understanding among the individuals themselves. Then, there is the need of national education to awaken the national consciousness and the spirit of patriotism in the countrymen. And there is as well a need of international education to develop a sense of oneness and unity among the whole of mankind, to bring about world unity. This helps to kindle in us a sense of universality with the creation as a whole. True education will carry us even further by transcending the bounds of universality to experience the joy of the Infinite and the Supreme Unity.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother clearly visualised that it is only by the direct descent of the supramental Truth-Consciousness on earth that the condition of terrestrial life and existence can be tranformed, the harmony and unity established.

And it is in accordance with the will of Sri Aurobindo that the Mother opened the "Sri Aurobindo International University Centre", later renamed the "Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education" which is to prepare the élite of humanity to receive and manifest the new light so as finally to form the divine race upon earth. Every student and teacher of the Centre of Education should remember this great destiny before them. And now that the supramental Light and Power and Consciousness has already descended and

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

has been actively at work here, they should unitedly strive to be the fit instrument and vanguard through whom the Mother can canalise and materialise the Divine Will which is to divinise Matter and spiritualise humanity.

SPEECH BY SWADESH CHATTERJI

The ultimate aim of our education here is the acquisition and expression of the supreme Knowledge. The invaluable aids that our Centre of Education could give to the students in realising this object are:

1. To indicate the possibility and means of developing higher faculties of knowledge.
2. To prepare in the student an adequate instrument of expression of knowledge.

In formulating any system of education, we must clearly seize these two aspects of education — developing superior methods of acquiring knowledge and developing a capacity of expression. Till the present day our entire concentration was focussed on the second aspect. But strangely enough we did not realise that a capacity of eloquent expression is sadly impoverished without an access to true knowledge. Now it is an urgent need that we give equal importance to both of these aspects. We can no longer afford to neglect the development of higher faculties of knowledge, since that alone can truly distinguish our institution from so many thousands in the world, and not merely the abolition of tests, degrees and diplomas and other such differences. To bring forth this significant trait in our educational system what is of primary importance is to effect a radical change in the psychological attitude of the student towards studies. And here is the crux of the problem of education. Whether or not we change the external system of education is of secondary importance, but if a change is to be effected it must be done with the sole purpose of furthering our capacity to refine and develop the higher faculties of knowledge. Let me hasten to tell you that here I do not intend to formulate a new system of education. My main purpose is to suggest a better way of teaching and to make clear the role of the teacher.

A close examination of the prevalent unsatisfactory conditions immediately shows that the teacher is greatly responsible for failing to bring about among the students the right attitude towards studies. Time and again the Mother has said that the teacher must be a yogi. It is a fact that all the teachers are not yogis — to this they will themselves agree — and there is no

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

point in insisting again and again on this shortcoming of the teachers and leaving it at that. Many of us have a tendency to view our shortcomings as insurmountable and to leave matters as they stand. I for one believe that in spite of the serious handicap of the teachers, a lot can be done. What is needed is a new beginning, a new orientation. At this initial stage a great spiritual achievement is not immediately demanded but only a basic sincerity to attain to the goal we have set before us.

Now and again the teacher should remind the students of the aim of our education. All the actions of the teacher should be in conformity with this ideal — his way of dealing with the students, his way of correcting their note-books, etc. Each subject — poetry, history, mathematics — is trying to express and embody an aspect of a single truth. This deeper reality the teacher should try to seize, and instil in the students too an urge to get at that deeper truth. It is imperative that a striving towards such an aim becomes a most important preoccupation of the teacher. At present, inadvertently perhaps, we make watertight compartments between subjects. In teaching a subject the teacher often gets caught and limited by the subject-matter. In our institution specially, the subject-matter should not be all-important. It is necessary for the teacher to stand back from the subject and see in the light of the teachings of our Master the inner truth and significance behind the subjects. This is something to be taught to the students also; this will bring about automatically a profounder and more integral understanding of the subjects. For example, while teaching science the teacher can often step back and show to his students what a tremendous order and harmony reigns over the apparent chaos and disorder of the physical world. From purely scientific grounds the student is thus led to the discovery of a secret unity which is the bedrock of manifestation. If the students are mature enough the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother describing the process of manifestation could be read. If such a system of teaching is taken up, I am sure it will gradually result in a radical change in the attitude of the student *vis-à-vis* the studies. But it goes without saying that this way of teaching should not be made into an excuse for slackness on the part of the teacher, *i.e.*, the teacher must be well prepared to teach the subject proper and the introduction of the new element must not hamper this teaching.

I would have certainly loved to go through such a system of education. Now looking back in retrospect at my former days, when I was in the secondary classes, I see a student coming to attend classes quite regularly but without any particular aim in view — he comes because his friends come and he has nothing else to do. In the system described earlier, the student-life acquires a profound significance — it is not merely a to-and-fro motion from home to class and back and the acquisition of some information in the process. The student-life becomes a constant quest for the Truth, a sustained

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

seeking after the great principles that unite the appalling multiplication of Time and Space.

All that I have said till now will help to usher a new atmosphere in our Centre of Education. It will change the attitude both of the teacher and of the student towards studies. Let us now turn to the central problem — the development of higher faculties of knowledge. Repeatedly the Mother has insisted that *the method* of acquiring knowledge is through a silent mind. If to be able to think is a quality of the mind, to be capable of not thinking is a much superior mental quality. The mind with its army of thoughts is not an instrument of knowledge. Not until very recently have we started giving due importance to the development of this unique mental faculty. To begin with, it is necessary that all teachers should endeavour to acquire a certain quietude of the mind. A complete mental silence cannot immediately be demanded of the teachers. But what can and must be done by the teacher is to indicate to his students the full value of mental silence. It matters little if a student fails to do a good homework or solve a problem; but the teacher should precisely avail himself of this opportunity to show to his students how a quite mind could have helped him to do a better work. In these matters a constant insistence will prove a great help. One must be very careful not to introduce this topic in class as something very abstruse and philosophical but as something concrete, interesting, and above all of urgent necessity.

At the beginning a regular concentration in the class might not prove very fruitful. Awake the students to the stark necessity of achieving mental silence and leave them free to practise it by themselves, at home, while walking on the street, while waiting for a class to begin. I say this because it must be made clear to the students that mental silence is not only a way of acquiring knowledge but must also be a way of living. Awakening them to this necessity is the greatest contribution a teacher can make to the life of the students. If even a single student is made to realise the true importance of mental silence the teacher is greatly successful. Another point naturally comes in as complementary to mental silence and that is being conscious of all the movements of one's being. The student must be made conscious that he is in the midst of a flux of mental, vital and physical movements and that it is indispensable to come out of it. Regarding this subject it will be best to bring the students into direct contact with the writings of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. Here, we can take immense help from the Mother's recorded Talks. These Talks must be made to fit very naturally into our educational framework.

A system of education which proceeds on these lines will produce not only brilliant students but "living souls", children of the Mother who are, as Sri Aurobindo says, "straightforward, frank, upright and honourable human beings ready to develop into divine nature".

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"There are two kinds of knowledge, that which seeks to understand the apparent phenomenon of existence externally, by an approach from outside, through the intellect, — this is the lower knowledge, the knowledge of the apparent world; secondly, the knowledge which seeks to know the truth of existence from within, in its source and reality, by spiritual realisation. Ordinarily, a sharp distinction is drawn between the two, and it is supposed that when we get to the higher knowledge, the God-knowledge, then the rest, the world-knowledge, becomes of no concern to us: but in reality they are two sides of one seeking. All knowledge is ultimately the knowledge of God, through himself, through Nature, through her works. Mankind has first to seek this knowledge through the external life; for until its mentality is sufficiently developed, spiritual knowledge is not really possible, and in proportion as it is developed, the possibilities of spiritual knowledge become richer and fuller.

"Science, art, philosophy, ethics, psychology, the knowledge of man and his past, action itself are means by which we arrive at the knowledge of the workings of God through Nature and through life. At first it is the workings of life and forms of Nature which occupy us, but as we go deeper and deeper and get a completer view and experience, each of these lines brings us face to face with God. Science at its limits, even physical Science, is compelled to perceive in the end the infinite, the universal, the spirit, the divine intelligence and will in the material universe. Still more easily must this be the end with the psychic sciences which deal with the operations of higher and subtler planes and powers of our being and come into contact with the beings and the phenomena of the worlds behind which are unseen, not sensible by our physical organs, but ascertainable by the subtle mind and senses. Art leads to the same end; the aesthetic human being intensely preoccupied with Nature through aesthetic emotion must in the end arrive at spiritual emotion and perceive not only the infinite life, but the infinite presence within her; preoccupied with beauty in the life of man he must in the end come to see the divine, the universal, the spiritual in humanity. Philosophy dealing with the principles of things must come to perceive the Principle of all these principles and investigate its nature, attributes and essential workings. So ethics must eventually perceive that the law of good which it seeks is the law of God and depends on the being and nature of the Master of the law. Psychology leads from the study of mind and the soul in living beings to the perception of the one soul and one mind in all things and beings. The history and study of man like the history and study of Nature leads towards the perception of the eternal and universal Power and Being whose thought and will work out through

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the cosmic and human evolution. Action itself forces us into contact with the divine Power which works through, uses, overrules our actions. The intellect begins to perceive and understand, the emotions to feel and desire and revere, the will to turn itself to the service of the Divine without whom Nature and man cannot exist or move and by conscious knowledge of whom alone we can arrive at our highest possibilities.

"It is here that Yoga steps in. It begins by using knowledge, emotion and action for the possession of the Divine. For Yoga is the conscious and perfect seeking of union with the Divine towards which all the rest was an ignorant and imperfect moving and seeking. At first, then, Yoga separates itself from the action and method of the lower knowledge. For while this lower knowledge approaches God indirectly from outside and never enters his secret dwelling-place, Yoga calls us within and approaches him directly; while that seeks him through the intellect and becomes conscious of him from behind a veil, Yoga seeks him through realisation, lifts the veil and gets the full vision; where that only feels the presence and the influence, Yoga enters into the presence and fills itself with the influence; where that is only aware of the workings and through them gets some glimpse of the Reality, Yoga identifies our inner being with the Reality and sees from that the workings. Therefore the methods of Yoga are different from the methods of the lower knowledge....

"Neverthleess, Yoga does not either in its path or in its attainment exclude and throw away the forms of the lower knowledge, except when it takes the shape of an extreme asceticism or a mysticism altogether intolerant of this other divine mystery of the world-existence. It separates itself from them by the intensity, largeness and height of its objective and the specialisation of its methods to suit its aim; but it not only starts from them, but for a certain part of the way carries them with it and uses them as auxiliaries. Thus it is evident how largely ethical thought and practice, — not so much external as internal conduct, — enter into the preparatory method of Yoga, into its aim at purity. Again the whole method of Yoga is psychological; it might almost be termed the consummate practice of a perfect psychological knowledge. The data of philosophy are the supports from which it begins in the realisation of God through the principles of his being; only it carries the intelligent understanding which is all philosophy gives, into an intensity which carries it beyond thought into vision and beyond understanding into realisation and possession; what philosophy leaves abstract and remote, it brings into a living nearness and spiritual concreteness. The aesthetic and emotional mind and aesthetic forms are used by Yoga as a support for concentration even in the Yoga of Knowledge and are, sublimated, the whole means of the Yoga of love and delight, as life and action, sublimated, are the whole means of the Yoga of works. Contemplation of God in Nature, contemplation and service of God

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

in man and in the life of man and of the world in its past, present and future, are equally elements of which the Yoga of Knowledge can make use to complete the realisation of God in all things. Only, all is directed to the one aim, directed towards God, filled with the idea of the divine, infinite, universal existence so that the outward-going, sensuous, pragmatical preoccupation of the lower knowledge with phenomena and forms is replaced by the one divine preoccupation. After attainment the same character remains. The Yogin continues to know and see God in the finite and be a channel of God-consciousness and God-action in the world; therefore the knowledge of the world and the enlarging and uplifting of all that appertains to life comes within his scope. Only, in all he sees God, sees the supreme reality, and his motive of work is to help mankind towards the knowledge of God and the possession of the supreme reality. He sees God through the data of science, God through the conclusions of philosophy, God through the forms of Beauty and the forms of Good, God in all the activities of life, God in the past of the world and its effects, in the present and its tendencies, in the future and its great progression. Into any or all of these he can bring his illumined vision and his liberated power of the spirit. The lower knowledge has been the step from which he has risen to the higher; the higher illumines for him the lower and makes it part of itself, even if only its lower fringe and most external radiation."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 491-97.)

*
**

"For all must be done as a sacrifice, all activities must have the One Divine for their object and the heart of their meaning. The Yogin's aim in the sciences that make for knowledge should be to discover and understand the workings of the Divine Consciousness-Puissance in man and creatures and things and forces, her creative significances, her execution of the mysteries, the symbols in which she arranges the manifestation. The Yogin's aim in the practical sciences, whether mental and physical or occult and psychic, should be to enter into the ways of the Divine and his processes, to know the materials and means for the work given to us so that we may use that knowledge for a conscious and faultless expression of the spirit's mastery, joy and self-fulfilment. The Yogin's aim in the Arts should not be a mere aesthetic, mental or vital gratification, but, seeing the Divine everywhere, worshipping it with a revelation of the meaning of its works, to express that One Divine in gods and men and creatures and objects. The theory that sees an intimate connection between religious aspiration and the truest and greatest Art is in essence right; but we must substitute for the mixed and doubtful

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

religious motive a spiritual aspiration, vision, interpreting experience. For the wider and more comprehensive the seeing, the more it contains in itself the sense of the hidden Divine in humanity and in all things and rises beyond a superficial religiosity into the spiritual life, the more luminous, flexible, deep and powerful will the Art be that springs from the high motive. The Yogin's distinction from other men is this that he lives in a higher and vaster spiritual consciousness; all his work of knowledge or creation must then spring from there: it must not be made in the mind, — for it is a greater truth and vision than mental man's that he has to express or rather that presses to express itself through him and mould his works, not for his personal satisfaction, but for a divine purpose."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.)

***

"Because man is a mental being, he naturally imagines that mind is the one great leader and actor and creator or the indispensable agent in the universe. But this is an error; even for knowledge mind is not the only or the greatest possible instrument, the one aspirant and discoverer. Mind is a clumsy interlude between Nature's vast and precise subconscient action and the vaster infallible superconscient action of the Godhead.

"There is nothing mind can do that cannot be better done in the mind's immobility and thought-free stillness.

"When mind is still, then Truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence.

"Truth cannot be attained by the Mind's thought but only by identity and silent vision. Truth lives in the calm wordless Light of the eternal spaces; she does not intervene in the noise and cackle of logical debate.

"Thought in the mind can at most be Truth's brilliant and transparent garment; it is not even her body. Look through the robe, not at it and you may see some hint of her form. There can be a thought-body of Truth, but that is the spontaneous supramental Thought and Word that leap fully formed out of the Light, not any difficult mental counterfeit and patchwork. The Supramental Thought is not a means of arriving at Truth, but a way of expressing her; for Truth in the Supermind is self-found or self-existent. It is an arrow from the Light, not a bridge to reach it.

"Cease inwardly from thought and word, be motionless within you, look upward into the light and outward into the vast cosmic consciousness that is around you. Be more and more one with the brightness and the vastness. Then will Truth dawn on you from above and flow in you from all around you.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"But only if the mind is no less intense in its purity than its silence. For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo or sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

"Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy it distorts and disfigures what it receives. If it is not wide, it cannot house the effective power and creative force of the Truth. Some light may play there but it becomes narrow, confined and sterile: the Force that is descending is cabined and thwarted and withdraws again to its vast heights from this rebellious foreign plane. Or even if something comes down and remains it is a pearl in the mire; for no change takes place in the nature or else there is formed only a thin intensity that points narrowly upward to the summits, but can hold little and diffuse less upon the world around it."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, pp. 11-12.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FOURTEENTH SEMINAR

(In celebration of the Mother's 90th Birthday on 21 February 1968)

25 February 1968

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:

"What we expect from the Mother."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:

Q: What is the right thing that we should expect from You?

Everything

Q: What have You been expecting from us and from humanity in general for the accomplishment of Your Work upon earth?

Nothing

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Q: From Your long experience of over sixty years, have You found that Your expectation from us and from humanity has been sufficiently fulfilled?

As I am expecting nothing
I cannot answer this question

Q: Does the success of Your Work for us and for humanity depend in any way upon the fulfilment of Your expectation from us and from humanity?

Happily not.

20.2.1968

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM THE MOTHER

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

"*What we expect from the Mother*" — this somewhat unexpected question has teased my mind into some new dimensions of thought. It highlights the exigency of the time — the need to make a dynamic reappraisal of truth. Secondly, it gives me a glimpse of the Mother's abundant compassion for her children aspiring to create a new pattern of life. She is, as it were, standing before us with all her starry riches and condescending to meet our every enlightened wish. One also feels a silent quiver of gratitude for her granting us a freedom of choice. It is to be noted that she does not command us with 'Thou shalt's and 'Thou shalt not's. Instead, she urges us to formulate and enliven our otherwise diffusive aspirations. She wants us to make a self-searching examination into the secret springs of our nature. There is a nugget deep down in our heart. The Mother is waiting to see that we discover it.

But all this is yet on the periphery. Let us now be in the centre. What do we propose to expect from the Mother? Well, we are living at a critical turn of history when problems burgeon at every turn of our look. Thinkers worth their name have thrashed out the nature of these evils and suggested the possible remedies in ever-abounding books, articles, pamphlets. But the problems remain the same. The world continues to be a cacophony of discordant notes signifying nothing. We would certainly like to see harmony reigning on our globe and we can pray to the Mother to hasten its advent. But, I am afraid, a big majority of us are yet incapable of sympathising sincerely with these world-problems which seem to be out there beyond the pale of our beings. We may, of course, now and then indulge in a sort of intellectual sally and pretend to unravel the various skeins of life. But such flights are always ephemeral. Living in our own selves proves to be more spontaneous and perhaps quite legitimate. Every individual is a miniature world, and at the same time a part of the larger world encircling him. Any great transformation within his being will result in a corresponding repercussion in the outside world. Hence it is said: we cannot change our neighbour unless we change ourselves — a truth how often we forget in a racing enthusiasm to transform the world!

Since, then, we hold that the transformation of our own selves rather than the transformation of the world out there is our immediate concern, what part of our being would we like to put on the anvil? I believe that, as the children of the Mother aspiring to be worthy of her effulgent love, it is our heart we would like to put in the transfiguring fire. Yes, we all crave for

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

her love and yet precious little has been done to cleanse our heart. So often our aspirations dwindle, and darkling desires grow rife! Hosts of errant and floundering pleasures obfuscate our minds. Our actions militate against our aspirations. And life becomes painfully a tissue of contradictions. How, then, shall we remain constant in our aspirations? This is our common problem. And this we cannot hope to see resolved unless the Mother tends our strength. We, therefore, pray to the Mother:

"Give us strength that we may cleanse our hearts of all impurities; enlighten our reason so that in a medley of choices we may win now the truth; grant us perseverence so that we may never recant our promises to be your worthy children."

These, then, are our expectations — our ardent prayers we offer at the feet of the Mother.

SPEECH BY MANOJ DAS GUPTA

I have been asked to say "what I expect from the Mother". The answer for me is very simple: EVERYTHING and NOTHING. Sounds paradoxical? I explain.

I say *everything* because who else can give me everything? I know that she alone is capable of satisfying all my needs — from the most physical to the highest spiritual. For,

"She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns,
The Light that leans from the unrealised Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down."[1]

I say *nothing* because I know that she is already doing the needful — and that, in spite of all my stupid and obscure oppositions to her workings.

"Although our fallen minds forget to climb,
Although our human stuff resists or breaks,
She keeps her will that hopes to divinise clay;
Failure cannot repress, defeat o'erthrow;

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book III, Canto II, p. 314.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Time cannot weary her nor the Void subdue,
The ages have not made her passion less;
No victory she admits of Death or Fate."[1]

AMEN.

SPEECH BY MITA CHAKRAVARTI

A few girls were sight-seeing in a new place. All of a sudden they found themselves separated from their escorts and attacked by a band of ruffians. One of them prayed to the Mother for her help; and then, almost miraculously even in the midst of trouble-makers, the necessary succour came.

The girl in the narrative had prayed to the Mother for help to save her and her friends from the danger. In this way ordinary human beings like us ask the Mother for help and protection in all physical, vital and mental dangers.

Not only protection in danger, we also ask for constant guidance. We refer our dreams and wishes to her and expect her to make the choice for us.

This apparently is in contradiction to what Sri Aurobindo says. He says, from the Mother "desire nothing but the purity, force, light, wideness, calm, Ananda of the divine consciousness and its insistence to transform and perfect your mind, life and body. Ask for nothing but the divine, spiritual and supramental Truth, its realisation on earth and in you and in all who are called and chosen and the conditions needed for its creation and its victory over all opposing forces."[2]

It is true deep down within us, in our true self, we want nothing but truth and light of the divine consciouness. But in our confusion created by ignorance and ego we lose contact with this inner self and are unable to see through clearly.

In this ignorance it is the Mother alone who can help us. She with her Supreme Knowledge is the best guide and leader. So when we lay our wish before her, we do not want that she should act according to our will; we expect that she will do whatever she wants to do. She, being omniscient and omnipotent, is the best judge of all our needs. It may be a denial or a sanction; whatever it is, it is for our good, it is that which will help us to progress.

We are her children and her instruments — children who have to be constantly steered, instruments that have to be kept properly tuned. And so we constantly expect the Mother's protection, guidance and blessings. If this

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book IV, Canto I, p. 354.
[2] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), pp. 9-10.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

expectation is a sign of childish inconsideration and insistence, she in her love for us forgives us and answers our prayer in a manner that works for our greatest good.

SPEECH BY SHOBHA MITRA

We are constantly fluctuating, as Sri Aurobindo says, between our ignorant lower and our luminous higher nature. So there are moments when our surface consciousness gets clouded and we expect the Mother to fulfil our fragmentary ideas based on insufficient knowledge, our ignorant vital desires and passions, and our blind physical cravings. If she acts otherwise we feel disappointed, we revolt against her with the idea that she does not love us, she does not care for us. But we in our ignorance forget that she has not come to satisfy our purblind mental ideas, nor for the gratification of our senseless vital cravings and passions, nor for a life easily gliding through physical comforts, but for the transmutation of the base and the dark into the luminous and the true, and of the ugly and the wrong into the beautiful and the right. She has come to fulfil our highest aspirations which are, as Sri Aurobindo says, "to know, possess and be the divine being in an animal and egoistic consciousness, to convert our twilit or obscure physical mentality into the plenary supramental illumination, to build peace and a self-existent bliss where there is only a stress of transitory satisfactions besieged by physical pain and emotional suffering, to establish an infinite freedom in a world which presents itself as a group of mechanical necessities, to discover and realise the immortal life in a body subjected to death and constant mutation."[1] This being her mission, can we expect her to satisfy our petty human egoistic vital cravings?

But there are other moments too in our life when the inner lamps are lit, when we ask ourselves if we should expect anything at all from the Mother. Are we in the state to know even what should be our true expectation? Is she not the omnipotent, the omniscient Mother Divine whom Sri Aurobindo has described thus?

"She is the golden bridge, the wonderful fire.
The luminous heart of the Unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God;
She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns,

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 2.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The Light that leans from the unrealised Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down."[1]

It is she who is kindling the fire in our heart to strive towards God, Light, Freedom, Immortality, and it is she who sustains us with her love, compassion and motherly solicitude through the narrow, rugged and precipitous path that leads us to the eternal Truth. She knows too well our true needs because she is our Mother, our dear Divine Mother, our friend in need, our helper on the way, our saviour in danger, our only solace in distress. She will do all for us whether we expect it or not.

So, instead of expecting anything from the Mother, let this be our sole and predominant occupation in our present state of consciousness — to open ourselves more and more to her light, to her knowledge, to her love. To try to be her true instruments for the work of transformation for which she has come down, so that a day may come when with a spotless unperturbed heart we may say to her:

"Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close, —
Bride of the Fire!
I have shed the bloom of the earthly rose,
I have slain desire."[2]

Or in other words of Sri Aurobindo:

"I have given my mind to be dug Thy channel mind,
I have offered up my will to be Thy will:
Let nothing of myself be left behind
In our union mystic and unutterable.

"My heart shall throb with the world-beats of Thy love,
My body become Thy engine for earth-use;
In my nerves and veins Thy rapture's streams shall move;
My thought shall be hounds of Light for Thy power to loose.

"Keep only my soul to adore eternally
And meet Thee in each form and soul of Thee."[3]

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book III, Canto II, p. 314.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems*, (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5) p. 103.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 143.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READING OF THREE POEMS ON THE MOTHER

The Divine Shakti
Cosmic, Transcendent, Individual.

Send Thy pure cadences, O Mother Divine,
To echo inly through the caves
Of a deepening heart which knows itself for Thine.
Play Thy moon-music on the quiet waves
Of an ocean's wideness in the still soul,
Where tidal waters wait Thy hushed control.

Unsullied wisdom of gold which was thrice refined,
Shine in the clear space of holy noon
On all the upland hollows of the mind:
May every shadow-harbouring thought be strewn
With solar vastness and compelled
To feel all fear and all self-limits quelled.

Men have found Thee in wildness and sharp-tanged air,
Breathed of green multitudes of earth,
Far from hate's city, orbits of despair,
Alleys of desire or sultry streets of dearth.
Take my offered will and let it be
Fragrant as Thine own, tameless, pure and free.

(*Poems*, 1949, p. 70.) Arjava (J. A. Chadwick)

*
**

To Mother

Come on the wings of sleep
Grave or with a smile,
Come ere the hushed tide neap
Or tangling thoughts beguile.

On this dark spirit-main
Rise as a full-orbed moon,
Transform the murk of pain
To a fleckless silver boon.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Or through dream-heavy air
On sandals of sound draw nigh
Till echoes waking there
Spring forth in thrilled reply.

Out from a planet's gloom
All aspects call to Thee, —
Life in our stirless tomb,
Light on our darkened sea.

(*Poems, 1949*, p. 149.) ARJAVA (J. A. CHADWICK)

*
**

THE MOTHER

Aureoled with the flame of the intangible,
Here she stands upon the dumb rock of sleep;
Poised, an immense tranquillity of the sun —
The Mother of the night-spaced universe.
Here through this mire of deep oblivion
She, the limitless, must track her course
Into the very heart of death's abode;
Here she must wear the heavy earthly mask
Of life's gross ever-changing passion-moods;
She, who breathes life into the seas and stars
And wide worlds of enraptured harmonies
And golden vistas of unchanging bliss
And peaks of silence housing the heights of trance
And giant oceans of unbarrable power
And sweetness unconceived by mortal heart,
Must enter the dungeon-frame of mortality
To vesture this dun abysmal nakedness
With the golden passion of the Infinite.

ROMEN PALIT

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READINGS FROM THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

"In reality, the Divine gives to each individual exactly what he expects of Him. If you believe that the Divine is far and cruel, He will be far and cruel, because it will be necessary for your ultimate good that you feel the wrath of God; He will be Kali for the worshippers of Kali, and Beatitude for the Bhakta. And He will be the All-Knowledge of the seekers of Knowledge, the transcendent Impersonal of the illusionists; He will be atheist with the atheist and the love of the lover. He will be brotherly and close, a friend always faithful, always ready to succour for those who feel Him as the inner guide in each movement, at every moment. And if you believe that He can wipe away everything, He will wipe away all your faults, all your errors tirelessly and at every moment you can feel His infinite Grace. The Divine is indeed what you expect of Him in your deepest aspiration ....

"The Divine is with you according to your aspiration. Naturally that does not mean that He bends to the caprices of your outer nature, — I speak here of the truth of your being. And yet, sometimes He does fashion Himself according to your outer aspirations, and if, like the devotees, you live alternately in separation and union, ecstasy and despair, the Divine also will separate from you and unite with you, according as you believe. The attitude is thus very important, even the outer attitude. People do not know how important is faith, how faith is miracle, creator of miracles. If you expect every moment to be lifted up and pulled towards the Divine, He will come to lift you and He will be there, quite close, closer, ever closer."

(*Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1958, pp. 77-9.) THE MOTHER

***

"The soul goes to the Mother-Soul in all its desires and troubles, and the Divine Mother wishes that it should be so, so that she may pour out her heart of love. It turns to her too because of the self-existent nature of this love and because that points us to the home towards which we turn from our wanderings in the world and to the bosom in which we find our rest."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 544.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"The love which is turned towards the Divine ought not to be the usual vital feeling which men call by that name; for that is not love, but only a vital

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

desire, an instinct of appropriation, the impulse to possess and monopolise. Not only is this not the divine Love, but it ought not to be allowed to mix in the least degree in the Yoga. The true love for the Divine is self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender; it makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger — for these things are not in its composition. In return the Divine Mother also gives herself, but freely — and this represents itself in an inner giving — her presence in your mind, your vital, your physical consciousness, her power re-creating you in the divine nature, taking up all the movements of your being and directing them towards perfection and fulfilment, her love enveloping you and carrying you in its arms Godwards. It is this that you must aspire to feel and possess in all your parts down to the very material, and here there is no limitation either of time or of completeness. If one truly aspires and gets it, there ought to be no room for any other claim or any other disappointed desire. And if one truly aspires, one does unfailingly get it, more and more as the purification proceeds and the nature undergoes its needed change.

"Keep your love pure of all selfish claim and desire; you will find that you are getting all the love that you can bear and absorb in answer."

(*The Mother*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 25, pp. 181-82.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"Obviously, if people expect the ordinary kind of love from the Mother they must be disappointed — the love based on the vital and its moods. But that is just the kind of love that has to be overpassed in Yoga or transformed into something else."

(*Ibid.*, p. 178.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"In your relations with the Divine you are concerned not with the Divine's satisfaction of your personal desires, but with being pulled out of these things and raised to your highest spiritual possibilities, so that you may become united with the Mother within and as a result in the outer being also. That cannot be done by satisfying your vital desires — to do so would only increase them and give you into the hands of the ignorance and restless confusion of the ordinary Nature. It can be done only by your inner trust and surrender and by the pressure of the Mother's peace and Force working from within and changing your vital nature. It is when you forget this that you go wrong

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and suffer; when you remember it you progress and the difficulties become less and less insistent."

(*The Mother*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 25, p. 191.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"As for prayer, no hard and fast rule can be laid down. Some prayers are answered, all are not. You may ask, why should not then all prayers be answered? But why should they be? it is not a machinery: put a prayer in the slot and get your asking. Besides, considering all the contradictory things mankind is praying for at the same moment, God would be in a rather awkward hole if he had to grant all of them; it wouldn't do."

(*Letters On Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 902.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"I am charged by God to do his mighty work,
Uncaring I serve his will who sent me forth,
Reckless of peril and earthly consequence.
I reason not of virtue and of sin
But do the deed he has put into my heart.
I fear not for the angry frown of Heaven,
I flinch not from the red assault of Hell;
I crush the opposition of the gods,
Tread down a million goblin obstacles.
I guide man to the path of the Divine
And guard him from the red Wolf and the Snake.
I set in his mortal hand my heavenly sword
And put on him the breastplate of the gods.
I break the ignorant pride of human mind
And lead the thought to the wideness of the Truth;
I rend man's narrow and successful life
And force his sorrowful eyes to gaze at the sun
That he may die to earth and live in his soul.
I know the goal, I know the secret route:
I have studied the map of the invisible worlds;
I am the battle's head, the journey's star.
But the great obstinate world resists my word,
And the crookedness and evil in man's heart
Is stronger than Reason, profounder than the Pit,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

And the malignancy of hostile Powers
Puts craftily back the clock of destiny
And mightier seems than the eternal Will.
The cosmic evil is too deep to unroot:
The cosmic suffering is too vast to heal.
A few I guide who pass me towards the Light;
A few I save, the mass falls back unsaved;
A few I help, the many strive and fail:
But my heart I have hardened and I do my work:
Slowly the Light grows greater in the East,
Slowly the world progresses on God's road.
His seal is on my task, it cannot fail;
I shall hear the silver swing of heaven's gates
When God comes out to meet the soul of the world."

(*Savitri*, Cent. Ed., Vol.29, Book VII, Canto 4, pp. 509-10.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"A day may come when she must stand unhelped
On a dangerous brink of the world's doom and hers,
Carrying the world's future on her lonely breast,
Carrying the human hope in a heart left sole
To conquer or fail on a last desperate verge.
Alone with death and close to extinction's edge,
Her single greatness in that last dire scene,
She must cross alone a perilous bridge in Time
And reach an apex of world-destiny
Where all is won or all is lost for man.
In that tremendous silence lone and lost
Of a deciding hour in the world's fate,
In her soul's climbing beyond mortal time
When she stands sole with Death or sole with God
Apart upon a silent desperate brink,
Alone with her self and death and destiny
As on some verge between Time and Timelessness
When being must end or life rebuild its base,
Alone she must conquer or alone must fall.
No human aid can reach her in that hour,
No armoured God stand shining at her side.
Cry not to heaven, for she alone can save.
For this the silent Force came missioned down;

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

In her the conscious Will took human shape:
She only can save herself and save the world."

(*Savitri*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 29, Book VI, Canto 2, p. 461.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more at any happy change.
Each easy miracle of felicity
Of her transmuting heart the alchemy is."

(*Ibid.*, Book XII, p. 723.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIFTEENTH SEMINAR

28 April 1968

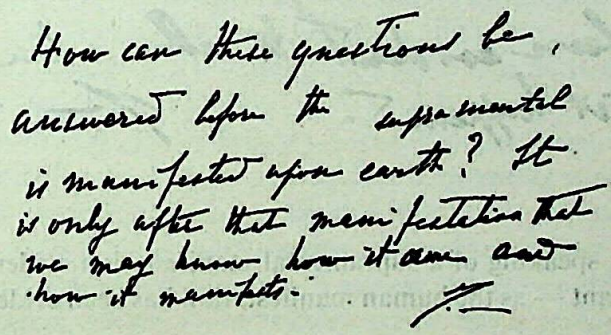
SUBJECTS CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:*

1. "How to remain young?"
2. "What is the secret of perpetual progress?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:

Q. 1: Since the process of decline and disintegration which brings old age is really the beginning of death, is it possible to prevent getting old without conquering death?

Is it possible to keep the body constantly young without complete transformation of its material cells by the supramental Ananda?

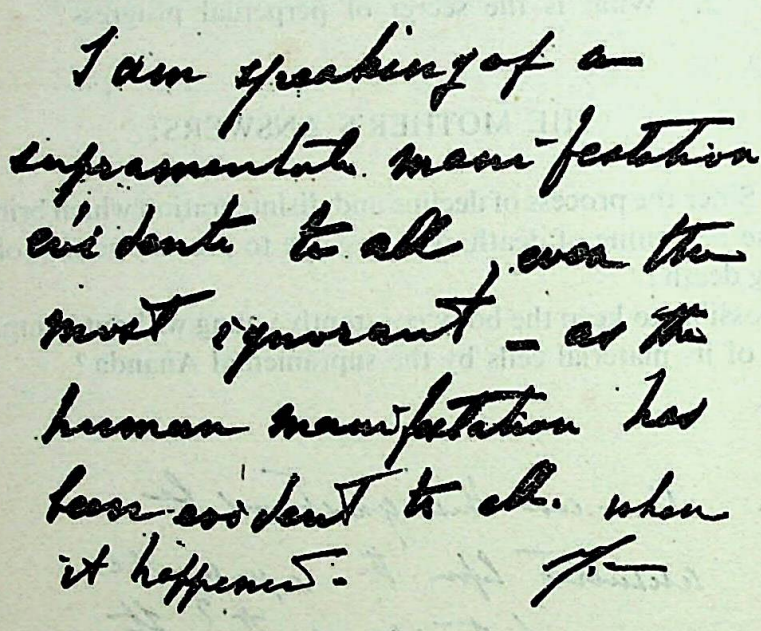


A: "How can these questions be answered before the supramental is manifested upon earth? It is only after that manifestation that we may know how it came and how it manifests."
25.4.1968

* These subjects are related to the Mother's New Year message for 1968: "Remain young, never stop striving towards perfection."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Q. 2: Does Your answer mean that the supramental is not yet manifested upon earth? Or are You referring to its *full* manifestation down to the roots of inconscient Matter? 29th February 1956 has been declared by You as the *beginning* of the supramental manifestation. So Your answer may be referring to its *complete* manifestation. Will You please clarify this point?


I am speaking of a supramental manifestation evident to all, even the most ignorant — as the human manifestation has been evident to all when it happened.

A: "I am speaking of a supramental manifestation evident to all, even the most ignorant — as the human manifestation has been evident to all when it happened."
26.4.1968

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

I. HOW TO REMAIN YOUNG?

SPEECH BY NANDA REDDY

One of the earliest preoccupations of man on this earth was his aspiration to attain immortality. Ceaseless have been his efforts in this respect. But alas! he has till this day not succeeded in his endeavour. However, he has managed to prolong the span of his youth, and thereby the span of his life, by means of physical practices as in Hathayoga and even by scientific methods as in the recent cases of heart transplantation. But his dream of immortality still eludes him and will always remain unattainable so long as he does not discover its true secret.

So long as man is bound by his lower nature, he lives in ignorance and is therefore subjected to the inevitable laws of nature. It is only when he breaks the wall of ignorance and rises from his "flat earthly state/To the discovery of a greater self"[1] that he can overcome all mortal laws. And the "muddy vesture" will no longer decay.

The youth to which the Mother refers in her New Year's message is not so much the youth of the body as the youth of the spirit — that is, to remaining young in consciousness. In fact, as she says, "Youth does not depend on the fewness of years one has lived, but on the capacity to grow and to progress."[2] It is not a time of life but a state of mind, a season of hope, aspiration and energy, a period when one enjoys life for one finds joy and beauty in all that one sees. The secret of eternal youth is perpetual progress.

What is it that makes us progress? It is the aspiration to realise our ideals that stimulates us to march on the ever-lengthening road of progress. Aspiration is a joy forever and it is this that renews our energy and keeps us moving on an ascending scale of progress. Therefore our aspiration should be high and noble, for on the quality of our aspiration will depend the quality of our progress. Shoot at the midday sun or else the effort is not worth the aim.

The idea of aspiration brings us to the idea of the future. "To be young is to live in the future, for the future," says the Mother. The refusal to be bound by old conventions enables us to look into the future which carries in itself the promise of realisation. This instils in us a spirit of adventure and thence we begin, in a way, to live dangerously — "come what may", we are ready to take a leap into the depths of the unknown gulfs.

Youth depends not only on the capacity to live in the future but also on

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book I, Canto IV, p. 46.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1949, p. 28.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the capacity to make much of the present hours. To see the world with a fresh consciousness is what makes the world an object of wonder. Interest and curiosity or, in a higher sense, let us call them hope and aspiration, strip the veil of familiarity and show the world in all its splendour of form and colour. Things common are gilded with the alchemy of the uncommon. Thus the commonest raindrop on a glass pane becomes "a visitor from the solitudes of time". And the meanest flower brings "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears".

We are so busy getting and spending that we do not have time to stand and stare. So occupied are we with digging gold out of the ground that we neglect the other treasures which toss about in profusion during the operation. It is when we are fresh in ourselves that we can perceive the "dearest freshness deep down" in all things. We should cultivate the habit of seeing things as if we were seeing them for the first time. In fact, this is the secret of remaining ever green.

All kinds of experiences pour in when we look at the things around us with a child's wonder. Experience gives us a true knowledge. And each one is only a stage on the road to truth. Through the gateway of each stage gleams the eternal world which recedes further and further as we move towards it. The very fact that we move, makes us progress. We should progress not because we want to have the fruits of our efforts but for the sake of progress itself. "To travel hopefully," says Stevenson, "is better than to arrive."

So long as we move on the path of progress, so long as we strive towards perfection without being satisfied with what has been achieved, we remain young. And the heart's recording machine receives messages of beauty, cheer, hope and courage.

As soon as we are fully content with ourselves and feel that all has been done, as soon as we want to sit and enjoy the benefits of past efforts, we cease to progress. We fall back and begin to degenerate. We grow old not by living a number of years but by deserting our ideals, by refusing to grow and to progress. The snow of pessimism and the ice of cynicism begin to deposit themselves and to benumb our nerves. No more do we receive messages of cheer and courage. Life ends in becoming a sad dull meaningless tale.

Unless we remain young in spirit, life would not be an interesting episode. Oh! it is bliss to be young when joy ever stirs in the dancing blood. Youth bubbles with life. It breaks through the wall of past habits and beliefs and marches breast forward towards the future which, as the Mother says, is "like an attractive sun shining with the innumerable possibilities yet to be achieved".[1] To be young is very heaven when existence itself becomes "a divine experiment". And the days become "a happy pilgrim march".

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1968, p. 19.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SPEECH BY HENNING CHRISTENSEN

This time the Mother has chosen for us two subjects which are so intimately related that if you are engaged in one of them you will automatically be occupied with the other too.

For, if anyone wants to remain young he must first of all know the secret of perpetual progress, because without this knowledge he is bound to follow the usual and well-known cycle of Nature's method which in the end always terminates all things with decay and death.

So, first of all, we must learn to master Nature's play in us and be the sovereign rulers of our own destinies: in a way we must transcend Nature in order to return upon her and master her inexorable laws.

But, you may ask, why do we have to transcend Nature? Would it not be possible to achieve the same goal without going beyond or rejecting Nature? Surely, you are right, for to transcend Nature does not mean to abandon her completely — like the ascetic in his refusal. We want to return upon her, to transform her in order to fulfil the Divine's intention in us.

To that Sri Aurobindo says: "There are those who seek to kill Nature in order to become the self; but that is not God's intention in humanity. We have to transcend Nature, not to kill it." [1] But on the other hand he also says; "By yielding to Nature, we fall away both from Nature and from God; by transcending Nature we at once fulfil all possibilities of Nature and rise towards God." [2]

What Sri Aurobindo here says is that we have to become the self if we want to realise Divinity and that which is included in this state of perfection, namely, perpetual progress and everlasting youth.

This is the divine life of the superman.

"It is to be free and not a slave, to be one and not divided, to be immortal and not obscured by death, to be full of light and not darkened, to be full of bliss and not a sport of grief and suffering, to be uplifted into power and not cast down into weakness. It is to live in the Infinite and possess the finite. It is to live in God and be one with him in his being." [3]

And again:

"To be immortal is to be infinite in being and consciousness and bliss; for the Spirit is infinite and that which is finite lives only by his infinity." [4]

So we see that our first preoccupation must be to reach the Infinite and

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 53. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, p. 75. [4] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

to be one with God. And having once ascended and touched the Divine it becomes possible for us to receive the divine Force of transformation, without which we cannot accomplish anything at all.

In the beginning there will be an inability to contain and assimilate the Power, but this can be remedied by an ever-increasing will to receive and by an opening of all the parts of our being. "This is only possible," Sri Aurobindo says, "if there is on our part a progressive surrender of the being into the hands of the Divine; there must be a complete and never-failing assent, a willingness to let the Divine Power do with us whatever is needed for the work that has to be done." [1]

This is the solution of our problem, and it means a conquest of, not mere control over, the forces that bring about mortality through the agency of disease and age that are the emissaries of death.

Unless we unite with the higher consciousness of God, unless we become integrated in all the parts of our being by this union with the higher realms of Truth, Light, Power and Consciousness above this mortal plane, we cannot hope to achieve our highest ideal. This integration is necessary because that is the right and only cure for the ills of disintegration caused by the disharmony working havoc in the various members of what must be a harmonic unit, a well-organised human system.

Having established this union it becomes possible for us to progress perpetually, because we are no longer bound with the fetters of ordinary ignorant Nature; we have transcended her, we have become self-rulers and all-rulers, therefore we are free to move and go where we want to.

By this integration we come into contact with the Divine Consciousness that is also Divine Force, Energy, Power and it is this Force or Power which is at the source of all cosmic activities. As a part of the cosmos, man is also receiving from this illimitable source, but because he is a being at variance with himself he receives only a fraction of what he could receive. On entering into his field of action the Force gets diminished to a considerable extent, and most of what he gets hold of he again disperses without turning it to effective use.

So, if he wants to profit by that which has descended into him, he must furthermore utilise different means and devices to retain and assimilate the surplus of energy which is allotted to him.

First of all, he should observe a great regularity in sleep, food, physical exercises and in all activities, from the mental region to the most physical. There should be created a balance so that the whole system might express the higher consciousness as harmoniously and as powerfully as possible. To reach this goal one must strictly shun all excess, all vice, small or big, everything that is harmful to progress. That advice pertains to the whole being.

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 71.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Of the body one should not ask more than the strictly necessary amount of effort, the energy required for growth and progress, shutting out most strictly all that produces exhausting fatigue and leads in the end to degeneration and decomposition of the material elements. The vital being must not be strangled, starved or deprived of sensations, because it is nourished chiefly by sensations and it would be wrong to avoid them on the ground that it usually is the seat of gross impurities. On the contrary, we should utilise our sensations with discrimination and discernment. There should be a constant enlightening, strengthening and purification of the vital, furthering the true progress of the being. Lastly, there is the mental being which we can develop by gradually obtaining the power of silencing it. This ability furthers the inner peace and concentration and creates an atmosphere conducive to progress. Moreover, in silence, many things are done better and more quickly.

Thus we see that to get the best out of the energy at our disposal we should be careful not to waste it away. On the other hand, we should not yield to Nature, but be master of her. Neither should there be suppression, much less the destruction, of what could be transformed into divinity, nor should we accept the inexorable laws of Nature. But these are only intermediate stages, though indispensable on the supreme quest; for what do they avail us if we do not aspire full-heartedly to become united with the Divine? Him we should love, and only Him, if we want to become of His nature.

"Never stop striving towards perfection", because that which you try to identify yourself with, you will sooner or later become; and remember all the time that you are an instrument, a representative of the Supreme, and that you must resign yourself completely to His Will and do whatever He demands of you, if you want to achieve the aim you have set before you.

And always you should keep these words of the Mother before you as your highest ideal:

"Instead of letting oneself go in the current of one's nature, of one's mood, one must keep constantly in mind this kind of feeling that you are a representative of the Supreme Knowledge, the Supreme Truth, the Supreme Law and you must apply it in the most honest way, in the most sincere way you are capable of; then you make great progress yourself and can make others also progress."[1]

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1964, p. 45.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

II. WHAT IS THE SECRET OF PERPETUAL PROGRESS?

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

The idea of progress presupposes a path between a beginning and an end. And, then, the end of today may very well be the beginning of tomorrow. Hence the journey becomes eternal.

Progress is essentially the watchword of man. While the other primates are satisfied with the rigid patterns of life, man alone shows a flexibility of behaviour and an urge to liberate himself from the shackles of nature. And yet often the question looms large over our mind whether man has at all made any worth-while progress. Many undesirable facts in history oblige us to take a modest view of ourselves. There are some thinkers who take an extremely negative view of human development; they believe that all idea of progress is an illusion. Man may have shown some remarkable achievements in the handling of matter but he has made no headway in controlling his primitive instincts and habits. Religion and moral teachings only veneered the grosser elements in man but could not transform them. Since life could not be transformed religion has preached escapism and exhorted us to seek perfection in some celestial or supracosmic existence. No attempts were made to achieve progress and perfection in all the spheres of human life itself. Now, for the first time we hear from Sri Aurobindo that "all life is Yoga". We are given a promise and a divine assurance that the transfiguring flames have descended on the earth to remould the entire life into harmony and perfection. When we think of progress here, in the Ashram, we mean not only spiritual enlightenment but also a divine transformation of life, mind and body by the rejection of old habits and animal instincts.

Whatever be our vision of progress — intellectual, physical or spiritual — its indispensable ingredient is will, an unfaltering, inflexible will that nothing can swerve or break. Normally we encounter a big contradiction between our ideals and desires. To train the mind to remain calm, fixed to the purpose and resolute in will requires a discipline which is often abhorrent to the vital and physical. It is due to these vital-physical revolts that we experience so many back-slides on the path of spiritual progress. Human will, however, even at its best is ignorant and limited. The secret of perpetual progress is to establish a union of our human will with its source — the Divine Will. But in the beginning the aspirant may be far from the divine source and, therefore, in the initial stage he has entirely to bank upon his own faltering will. But by a sustained discipline he can always purify and increase his strength. By discipline we mean an honest discrimination between all the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

movements rising within us and accepting only those which are congenial to the desired growth and rejecting ruthlessly others that are uncongenial. In other words, the ability to reject untoward movements gives value to our life and enhances our will. Thus with will and self-discipline one can aspire to make a steady progress.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"By yielding to Nature, we fall away both from Nature and from God; by transcending Nature we at once fulfil all the possibilities of Nature and rise towards God. The human touches first the divine and then becomes divine.

"There are those who seek to kill Nature in order to become the self; but that is not God's intention in humanity. We have to transcend Nature, not to kill it.

"Every movement of humanity which seeks to deny Nature however religious, lofty, austere, of whatever dazzling purity or etheriality, is doomed to failure, sick disappointment, disillusion or perversion. It is in its nature transient, because it contradicts God's condition for us. He has set Nature there as a condition of His self-fulfilment in the world.

"Every movement of humanity which bids us be satisfied with Nature, dwell upon the earth and cease to look upwards, however rational, clear-sighted, practical, effective, comfortable it may be is doomed to weariness, petrification and cessation. It is in its nature transient because it contradicts God's intention in us. He dwells secret in Nature and compels us towards Him by His irresistible attraction.

"Materialistic movements are as unnatural and abnormal as ascetic and negatory religions and philosophy. Under the pretence of bringing us back to Nature, they take us away from her entirely; for they forget that Nature is only phenomenally Nature but in reality she is God. The divine element in her is that which she most really is; the rest is only condition, process and stage in her development of the secret divinity.

"Not to be immersed, emmeshed and bound by Nature, not to hate and destroy her, is the first thing we must learn if we would be complete Yogins and proceed towards our divine perfection.

"Being still natural in the world to transcend Nature internally, so that both internally and externally we may master and use her as free and lord, *svarāṭ samrāṭ*, is our fulfilment.

"Being still the symbol to reach through it the being that symbolises itself, to realise the symbol, is our fulfilment.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Being still a figure of humanity, man among men, a living body among living bodies, though housed in life and matter yet a mental being among mental beings, being and remaining all this that we are apparently, yet to exceed all this apparent manhood and become in the body what we are really, God, Spirit supreme and infinite, pure Bliss, pure Force, pure Light, this is our fulfilment."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, pp. 53-54.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"Only those years that are passed uselessly make you grow old.

"A year spent uselessly is a year during which no progress has been accomplished, no growth in consciousness has been achieved, no further step has been taken towards perfection.

"Consecrate your life to the realisation of something higher and broader than yourself and you will never feel the weight of the passing years."

(*Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1958, p. 124.) THE MOTHER

***

"The moment you cease to advance, you fall back. From the moment you are satisfied and aspire no longer, you begin to die. Life is movement, life is effort; it is marching forward, scaling the mountain, climbing towards future revelations and realisations. Nothing is more dangerous than wanting to rest. It is in action, in effort, in forward march that you must find rest, the true rest that comes from a total trust in the Divine Grace, the absence of desires, the victory over egoism."

(*Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1957, p. 93.) THE MOTHER

***

"When you are in need of an external change, it means that you do not progress internally. For he who progresses internally can live under the same external conditions; these constantly reveal to him new truths.

"All outward change must be the spontaneous and inevitable expression of an inner transformation. Normally, all amelioration of the conditions of physical life should be the outward flowering of a progress realised within."

29.3.1958 THE MOTHER

***

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Like all things in Yoga, the effort for progress must be for the love of the effort for progress, the joy of the effort and aspiration towards progress must be sufficient in themselves, quite apart from the result. All that you do in Yoga must be done for the joy of doing it and not in view of the result you want to secure. After all, in life, always, in everything, the result does not belong to us. And if we wish to have the right attitude, we must act, feel, think, make an effort, spontaneously, because that is the thing to be done and not because you wish to get this or that result. . . .

"The spontaneous act, done because one cannot do otherwise and done as an offering with a good will, is the only thing that has the true value."

(*Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958, pp. 99-100.) THE MOTHER

*
**

"There are three powers of the cosmos to which all things are subject — creation, preservation and destruction; whatever is created lasts for a time, then begins to crumble down. The taking away of the Force of destruction implies a creation that will not be destroyed but last and develop always. In the Ignorance destruction is necessary for progress — in the Knowledge, the Truth-creation, the law is that of a constant unfolding without any Pralaya."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 33.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Modern society has discovered a new principle of survival, progress, but the aim of that progress it has never discovered, — unless the aim is always more knowledge, more equipment, convenience and comfort, more enjoyment, a greater and still greater complexity of the social economy, a more and more cumbrously opulent life. But these things must lead in the end where the old led, for they are only the same thing on a larger scale; they lead in a circle, that is to say, nowhere; they do not escape from the cycle of birth, growth, decay and death, they do not really find the secret of self-prolongation by constant self-renewal which is the principle of immortality, but only seem for a moment to find it by the illusion of a series of experiments each of which ends in disappointment. That so far has been the nature of modern progress. Only in its new turn inwards, towards a greater subjectivity now only beginning, is there a better hope; for by that turning it may discover that the real truth of man is to be found in his soul."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 210.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Man's life is made up of the light and the darkness, the gains and losses, the difficulties and dangers, the pleasures and pains of the Ignorance, a play of colours moving on a soil of the general neutrality of Matter which has as its basis the nescience and insensibility of the Inconscient. To the normal life-being an existence without the reactions of success and frustration, vital joy and grief, peril and passion, pleasure and pain, the vicissitudes and uncertainties of fate and struggle and battle and endeavour, a joy of novelty and surprise and creation projecting itself into the unknown, might seem to be void of variety and therefore void of vital savour. Any life surpassing these things tends to appear to it as something featureless and empty or cast in the figure of an immutable sameness; the human mind's picture of heaven is the incessant repetition of an eternal monotone. But this is a misconception; for an entry into the gnostic consciousness would be an entry into the Infinite. It would be a self-creation bringing out the Infinite infinitely into form of being, and the interest of the Infinite is much greater and multitudinous as well as more imperishably delightful than the interest of the finite. The evolution in the Knowledge would be a more beautiful and glorious manifestation with more vistas ever unfolding themselves and more intensive in all ways than any evolution could be in the Ignorance. The delight of the Spirit is ever new, the forms of beauty it takes innumerable, its godhead ever young and the taste of delight, *rasa*, of the Infinite eternal and inexhaustible. The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest of the Ignorance; it would be a greater and happier constant miracle."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 1069.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SIXTEENTH SEMINAR

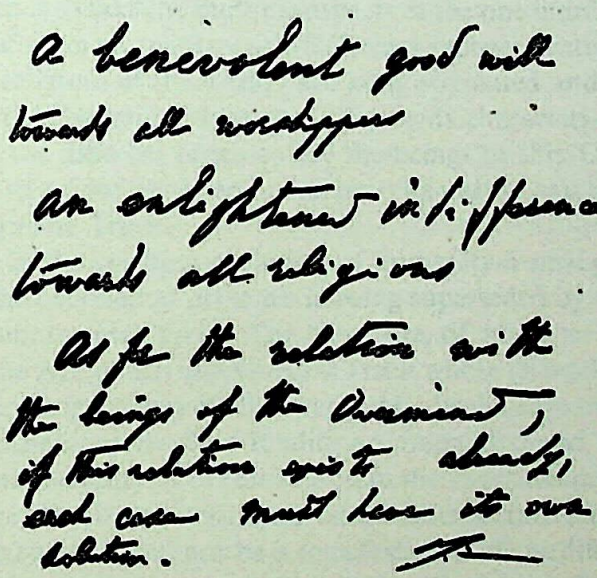
23 February 1969

SUBJECTS CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

1. "The God of the Religions and the ONE Divine."
2. "Asceticism and true austerity."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:

Q. 1: What should be the attitude of the sadhak of Sri Aurobindo's yoga towards the various forms of God worshipped by different religions in the past and the present? If he continues to worship them, will it create an obstacle to his progress and prevent his realisation of his aim?



A: "A benevolent goodwill towards all worshippers.

"An enlightened indifference towards all religions.

"As for the relation with the beings of the Overmind, if this relation exists already, each case must have its own solution."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Q. 2: What will be the role of the different gods of the religions in the supramental age? Can they help in the establishment of the supramental Truth upon earth and in the work of the transformation of Matter?

It is too soon to
put such a question.

A: "It is too soon to put such a question."

19.2.1969

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

I. THE GOD OF THE RELIGIONS AND THE ONE DIVINE
II. ASCETICISM AND TRUE AUSTERITY

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

A clear understanding of the two subjects which we shall consider in this Seminar is essential for all who are drawn towards Sri Aurobindo's Supramental Yoga because they are intimately related to its central object and discipline which are radically different from those of the traditional religious and spiritual systems.

A belief in God and a worship of Him in some way or other are the indispensable foundations of all religions, but different religions (and often different sects of the same religion) have created different forms of God, and each one considers its deity to be the Supreme Divine. Without entering into a detailed explanation of this phenomenon, I will only mention that it was unavoidable in the past spiritual evolution of humanity which was governed by what Sri Aurobindo has designated the Overmind plane in the ascending scale of spiritual planes beyond mind. The characteristic trend of the Overmind in dynamic action is to take the multiple aspects of the one infinite Truth and to give to each of them its separate self-fulfilment independently of the others. The different religions of the world have been originated and maintained by the beings of the Overmind plane according to its characteristic action. The great gods of the different religions are the beings of this Overmind plane and each one of whom has tried to represent its partial and limited spirituality as the Supreme Truth.

But now in the spiritual evolution of humanity a new phase has commenced, for the overmental principle is being superseded by the higher principle of the supramental Truth. The New Age, of which we speak in these Seminars, is the Age of this supramental Truth whose characteristic action is radically different from that of the Overmind. In the supramental Truth all the multiple aspects of the One Reality are integrated and harmonised together in its infinite unity. For this reason in the supramental Age the manifestation of the spirit in human life will take a different turn than that it took in the overmental age. It will not be a manifestation of the different aspects of the One Truth on their separate, independent and often conflicting lines but a harmonised manifestation of them in a concordant unity. Also the manifestation of the supramental Truth will do away with the rule of the overmental gods who have, through the different religions created by them, governed the spiritual aspiration of humanity till now; in their place it will bring the rule of the ONE Divine.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

We may therefore say that at the present juncture of evolution the hour of religions is over and with it also the hour of the gods who created them and whom they worship. In the supramental Age these partial and limited gods will be replaced by the ONE God, the supramental Ishwara, who will directly rule the earth and humanity by His infallible will.

*

So also in Sri Aurobindo's yoga the religious practice of austerity will be replaced by true austerity. The discipline of austerity is indispensable in all religions and spiritual systems, but so far it has everywhere based itself upon an attitude of denial and condemnation, suppression and mortification of the life-energies. This negative attitude was derived from that view of the world which considers it as an illusory Maya, a kingdom of the devil, a snare of falsehood from which the only way of escape was a total rejection of life and worldly existence.

But Sri Aurobindo's yoga takes a totally different view of world-existence and human life. It regards the world "not as an invention of the devil or a self-delusion of the soul, but a manifestation of the Divine, although as yet a partial because a progressive and evolutionary manifestation."[1] Therefore it does not reject life but, accepting it in its entirety, seeks to divinise it by liberating it from its present imperfections. Its aim, therefore, is not to condemn and suppress life but to transform and divinise it.

The austerity of the Integral Yoga is the discipline intended to achieve this liberation and transformation; it is positive, constructive, creative in its aim and method and radically opposed to the past religious austerity which was negative, destructive and escapist.

You will thus realise that both the subjects which we have for this Seminar are of paramount importance in understanding the difference between the aim and the method of Sri Aurobindo's yoga and of the various religious and spiritual systems of the past.

II. ASCETICISM AND TRUE AUSTERITY

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJEE

I begin this paper with a quotation from Sri Aurobindo: "The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when he seeks a supra-

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed. Vol. 20), p. 313.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

physical Knowledge."[1]

Poets, artists, thinkers have all extolled the glory of this earthly existence. "A leafy luxury" of nature, sapphire stars, rippling rills are indeed eternal fountains of joy. Death, suffering, impermanence create but a little stir in our earth-enchanted hearts. Amal Kiran, in one of his poems, writes:

> "Sky-lucent Bliss untouched by earthiness!
> I fear to soar lest tender bonds decrease.
> If Thou desirest my weak self to outgrow
> Its mortal longings, lean down from above,
> Temper the unborn light no thought can trace,
> Suffuse my mood with a familiar glow."[2]

These lines vividly express a sincere human aspiration of living in God here, upon this earth.

But let me hasten to add that this is not the usual feeling of the seekers of God. Buddhist, Shankarite, Christian saints and many others have decried this earthly existence. They encountered two different worlds existing at two different poles as it were — "a greater spiritual life above and a lower existence below". Such polarity of existence has always been a great enigma to God-intoxicated men. Not being able to reconcile these opposites the sages in the past denounced this mundane life and sought refuge in forests or caves. A number of Christian saints in medieval times lived a rigorous life in Egyptian deserts. These world-shunning ascetics saw the world, to use Sri Aurobindo's words, as "a lie, an insanity of the soul."

It was, then, taken for granted that denial of the material urges of man would entail suffering. The ascetics willingly accepted the bed of nails, whipping, hair-clothes, etc. to torture the body or at least to kill the sense of comfort in the body. A Chinese saint tore off his eyelids because he had resolved not to sleep. In fact, the history of asceticism will remain incomplete without reference to the hysteric torments inflicted upon the body. This has been so for one simple reason: the ascetic assumes bodily life to be fundamentally evil, and spirit to be the sole good.

Asceticism was not absent even from the ancient Greek civilisation, particularly from the Dionysian cult.[3] This sect believed that the soul was imprisoned in the body and by the practice of purification it could be released from the trammels of the physical existence. Long strenuous fasts were enjoined. Epimanides, a poet and prophet of Cnossos in Crete, is celebrated for fasting. He is said to have fallen into a deep sleep and waked up not before

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol, 18), p. 11.
[2] K. D. Sethna, "This Errant Life" in *The Secret Splendour*, p. 3.
[3] See *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 80.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

57 years! It is to be noted here that the Greek idea of *katharsis* had a deeper significance than the one commonly stated. It sought, explains Sri Aurobindo, "the purification of the *citta*, or mass of established ideas, feelings and actional habits in a man either by *samyama*, rejection, or by *bhoga*, satisfaction, or by both."[1]

Among the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians, fasting and other forms of self-mortification were enjoined but they did not have ascetic views as such.[2] The Sumerians and Babylonians had no clear conception of the soul. They believed that the soul disappeared a few months after death. Self-torture and penitence were meant to excite pity of the offended deity. The Egyptians, however, had a profounder religion. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and yet never disparaged the bodily existence. They had on the contrary a cheerful view of life. Ra, particularly in his manifestation as Aten, was an affectionate god. The world was his kingdom. The king Akhanaten wrote:

> "Thou risest beautifully in the horizon of heaven,
> O Living Aten who createst Life!
> When thou risest in the eastern horizon
> Thou fillest every land with beauty."[3]

And also,

> "Thou art the mother and the father of all thou hast made."[4]

For the Egyptians the world was beautiful because it was the creation of God.

The conception of "sin" is another source of self-mortification. A Muslim saint wept for 40 years because as a child he had stolen a brick from a neighbour's wall!

Although asceticism is widely practised among the sadhus of India, its history does not go back beyond the Buddhist era. In the Vedic period there was no asceticism proper. The Veda speaks of sacrifice but this has a deeper significance. It reveals that this material life is not the only existence knowable to man. There are higher planes and profounder depths within and to awaken to these planes and depths is the real goal of man. And it also says that such an ascent to higher planes brings "new birth". And again, each new birth is accompanied with wideness of consciousness till we are one with the Vast. This flight into the Vast may result, at a certain stage of ascent, in Nirvana, in the experience of the unreality of physical existence. But this is only a mid-way experience in the soul's upward journey. On a still higher plane of consciousness the world does not appear to be unreal. Death, suffer-

[1] *The National Value of Art* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 237.
[2] See *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 110.
[3] [4] See J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ing, limitation that we experience in the world are the results of Avidya, says the Isha Upanishad. When this Avidya disappears we are able to experience "harmony and oneness with the universe".

The human urge to enjoy is legitimate. But, being limited and egoistic, our enjoyment is also limited and egoistic. It is by surmounting these limitations that we enter into the true enjoyment of the world-existence. "By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy," says the Isha Upanishad. "The renunciation demanded", explains Sri Aurobindo, "is not a moral constraint of self-denial or a physical rejection, but an entire liberation of the spirit from any craving after the forms of things."[1] What we call true austerity consists in renouncing "the desire to possess and enjoy".

It is this desire to possess and enjoy — the desire called *tṛṣṇā*, thirst, by the Buddhists — that brings old age, death, despair, and suffering. According to Buddhism salvation consists in extinction of the individual in Nirvana.

But Sri Aurobindo strikes a new note. "Yoga", says Sri Aurobindo, "is in its essence a turning away from the ordinary material and animal life led by most men or from the more mental but still limited way of living followed by the few to a greater spiritual life, to the way divine."[2] And then he adds, and this is important to note, "every part of our energies that is given to the lower existence in the spirit of that existence is a contradiction of our aim and our self-dedication. On the other hand, every energy or activity that we can convert from its allegiance to the lower and dedicate to the service of the higher is so much gained on our road, so much taken from the powers that oppose our progress."[3] From this it is clear that it is not by repression or inhibition of the senses that we are seeking here to make ourselves perfect but by a conversion of their allegiance to the lower existence.

Incidentally, many outsiders on their visits to the Ashram have been puzzled as to the nature of our yoga here. We put on no ochre robes, use no wooden shoes, do not sleep on stone-beds, we have even no restrictions in food. All these and many other details speak against the traditional notion of Ashram life. Long back someone had asked Sri Aurobindo in a letter: "Why does the Mother put on rich and beautiful dresses?" Sri Aurobindo replied: "Is it your notion that the Divine should be represented on earth by poverty and ugliness?"[4]

In reply to another such letter Sri Aurobindo wrote: "A fine sari or a palace are expressions of the principle of beauty in things and that is their main value. The Divine Consciousness is not bound by these things and has no attachment, but it is also not bound to abstain from them if beauty in things is part of its intended action."[5]

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 75.
[2] [3] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 65.
[4] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol, 25), p. 361. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 362.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The true austerity consists, for the sadhak of the Integral Yoga, in attaining to an inner liberation by means of purification of the senses: "Being in God and yet living in man is the very difficulty that he is set here to solve and not to shun",[1] says Sri Aurobindo.

The Mother, in "Four Austerities and Four Liberations", says that the ascetic practices are "low, dark and diseased. Spiritual life, on the contrary, is a life of light and balance, beauty and joy".[2] But this "life of light and balance, beauty and joy" is more difficult than the life of asceticism. "Indeed, it is much more difficult", observes the Mother, "to lead a life of measure and balance, equanimity and serenity than to fight the abuses of pleasure and the obscuration they cause by the abuses of asceticism and the disintegration they bring about. It is much more difficult to secure a harmonious and progressive growth in calmness and simplicity in one's physical being than to ill-treat it to the point of reducing it to nothing. It is much more difficult to live soberly and without desire than to deprive the body of nourishment and clean habits so indispensable to it, just to show off proudly one's abstinence. It is much more difficult again to avoid, surmount or conquer illness by an inner and outer harmony, purity and balance than to disregard and ignore it, letting it do its work of ruin. And the most difficult thing of all is to maintain the consciousness always on the peak of its capacity and never allow the body to act under the influence of a lower impulse."[3]

The above quotation of the Mother shows not only the difficulties in the path but also our ideal here in the Ashram. To attain to this ideal, self-control and self-discipline are absolutely indispensable. This the Mother sums up in the four austerities to be observed: (1) Tapasya of Love, (2) Tapasya of Knowledge, (3) Tapasya of Power, (4) Tapasya of Beauty.

The idea of austerity is interlinked with the idea of sacrifice. In fact no yoga is possible without a "conscious sacrifice". The vulgar concept of sacrifice is a painful process of self-immolation or at least self-mortification. But this is not the essence of sacrifice. What is to be sacrificed "is not one's self", says Sri Aurobindo, "but the band of the spirit's inner enemies that we have to discourage, expel, slay upon the altar of the growth of the spirit; these can be ruthlessly excised, whose names are desire, wrath, inequality, greed, attachment to outward pleasures and pains, the cohort of usurping demons that are the cause of the soul's errors and sufferings... these have to be sacrificed in the harsher sense of the word."[4]

The Veda represents the idea of sacrifice as a "journey or voyage".[5] For it has an upward movement and its goal is "the vastness, the true existence,

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 312.
[2] [3] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 81.
[4] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), pp. 100-01.
[5] Sri Aurobindo, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 11), pp. 28-29.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the light, the felicity".[1] But the voyage is by no means easy and free of danger, the path is indeed arduous for the seeker after knowledge. For, as he proceeds he meets Dasyus and Danavas, Rakshasas and Wolves and Tearers ever vigilant to arrest the ascent of the pilgrim. "They must be expelled", affirms Sri Aurobindo, "overpowered, slain, thrust down into their nether darkness by the aid of the mighty and helpful deities."[2]

Thus purified by true austerity and sacrifice and renunciation we become "soldiers of light", not world-shunning ascetics but hero warriors ready to "fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born, against the past that seeks to endure; so that the new things may manifest and we be ready to receive them."[3]

SPEECH BY HENNING CHRISTENSEN

Nothing has been so much misunderstood as the subject of askesis and nothing yet is more important than to get the full understanding of what this is, for upon our understanding of it depends our whole outlook upon our spiritual destiny and our place in the universe.

Asceticism has always been held up as the royal path to spirituality and it has been considered so sacred that during the past ages it has come to mean the same as spirituality, almost to all people; but this is a wrong identification — and yet, there is a certain truth in the relation between the two. It is our task to elucidate what might be wrong and what might be right in this relation.

First of all, there is the ordinary and widespread idea that a spiritual man, a yogi, a saint is always a man who has renounced everything in order to pursue his own liberation without the burden of his lower undivine nature dragging him down into the ignorance time after time. Such a man, according to this general idea, must always be poor, without possession of any kind, except the minimum materials necessary for the maintenance of his bare physical existence, like food and clothes. Moreover, the saint, the god-seeker is always living in a solitary hermitage in the forest far away from all worldly turmoil and clamour, mostly absorbed in meditation while sitting immobile in a fixed position.

As an actual fact this may be true, for that has been and still is the general characteristic of a God-seeker. Yet it was not always so, as can be seen when we turn our gaze to the remote past — to the Vedic and Upanishadic times. We just need to think of Yajnavalkya who possessed huge herds of

[1] [2] Sri Aurobindo, *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* (Cent, Ed., Vol. 11), pp. 28-29.

[3] The Mother, "Students' Prayer".

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

cows, and King Janaka who could revel in unsurpassed riches and plenitude, without the least harm being done to their spiritual attainment. And these are not the only ones combining worldly abundance and spiritual opulence. Remind yourself also of all the other sages mentioned in the Upanishads and all the Rishis in the Vedas, all of whom actively associated with life in the world as teachers, not only as gurus but also as preceptors in skills like archery and grammar, just to mention two so-called unspiritual activities.

Such was the life of saints in olden times, but with the decline of true spiritual vision and intuition and with the growing development of the critical inquiring intellect, this happy union between world and spirit became totally disrupted and the ascetic attitude towards life had its sway.

The real light from the past was lost but what was retained was one of the means for realising the true spirit, as we shall see when asceticism as a method has been put in the right place in the process of sadhana.

It is true that asceticism has a part to play in the quest for the spirit, but if it wants to remain a truth we should properly understand what is the motivation and the psychological mechanism behind it.

One of the main reasons in favour of asceticism is the heavy impediment of the body and the vital nature which the fervent devotee and God-seeker feels as an immense hindrance to his spiritual growth and expansion. And the only solution he immediately perceives and to which he is irresistibly pushed by his impatient urge is to quell vigorously these dangerous opponents, to reject life, mortify the body, silence the mind and as quickly as possible escape into the immutable and pure spirit which he feels to be the only reality. The motivation behind this recoil from the world is in itself sound because the aim is to overpass the hold of the bodily nature upon the consciousness, and for the ascetic the one thing needful is to establish his own spirit in the pure spiritual consciousness at any cost; so if Nature refuses to submit to the demands of his zeal the only way out is to withdraw from her. But this way of renunciation is indeed extremely difficult and even dangerous and in most cases it foils its own purpose.

First, it must be noted, it is impossible in this way to escape from the clutches of Nature. "For none stands even for a moment not doing work, everyone is made to do action helplessly by the modes born of Prakriti", says the Gita.[1] What has happened is that the ascetic has only substituted one kind of action for another; he controls the organs of action, but with the mind he remembers and dwells still upon the objects of the senses. And even if he has succeeded in silencing his mind altogether, still he does works, or rather consents — because he cannot do otherwise — to Prakriti's working in his body, though he may be sitting motionless like a stone pillar. Thus he

[1] Chap. III, Verse 5.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

has deluded himself, and his formally regulated method of control is a false and vain method.

Moreover, it happens in most cases that the ascetic extremist loses himself completely in the labyrinth of mortificational practices never to get out again. In itself it is futile to engage in a violent wrestle with Nature in order to conquer her, because she is infinitely more powerful and her resources of strength are illimitable; so in this battle man is bound to lose. If he wants to master her, he should acquire the appropriate knowledge of human nature so that he may know the source and character of the frailties and impurities which hamper his spiritual progress. But unfortunately most men are too weak both in their intellect and in their will, so that they are unable to endure and detach themselves from the vehement insistence of the senses and their objects, even while continuing to move freely amidst them.

Another reason why this endeavour defeats itself is that the wrestle with Nature goes on indefinitely and in the long run all these practices of systematic repressions, self-tortures, self-immolations tend to establish themselves firmly in a dull groove of fixed habit from which it is impossible to escape. Also one can be sure that after a decade of mortification of the flesh one's most precious instrument and the basis of the sadhana — the body — is completely disabled beyond hope of restoration. Even Buddha had to pay heavily for his years of immoderate austerities and he realised that to achieve anything of definite value one should keep the middle path, avoiding the two extremes.

But many people cannot do otherwise and they have to follow the trend of their nature before it has developed sufficiently to stand the pressure from the environment. Until then it is legitimate for them to retire to the forest or to the hill-top where they would be able to create an atmosphere of their own, away from the weakening and seducing vital vibrations of other human beings.

But this procedure — to suppress the problem by suppressing the possibility of the problem — does not bring the genuine and true mastery, because it mistakes the effect for the cause of all the troubles.

The solution of the problem depends upon right knowledge, and what is needed is not only right intellectual knowledge but also true spiritual vision.

The greatest spiritual men and the genuine God-lovers always had the true perception of the causes of deviation and fall. They knew that these are within and not without and that the surest means to get rid of these impediments is to have inner renunciation — detachment — and to be equal and unaffected in all situations.

It should be understood thoroughly that the objects of the senses are not the causes of our bondage. The cause of all attachment is the insistence of the mind upon them. Sri Aurobindo says concerning this: "The body's

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

actions, even the mind's actions are nothing in themselves, neither a bondage, nor the first cause of bondage. What is vital is the mighty energy of Nature which will have her way and her play in the great field of mind and life and body; what is dangerous in her, is the power of her three Gunas, modes or qualities to confuse and bewilder the intelligence and so obscure the soul."[1]

The first requisite is to rise above the workings of the three gunas. If we can detach ourselves completely from them then there is no need for us any more to denounce actions as the evilest thing upon earth. Now actions can continue, as they must continue, because inaction in itself is impossible for human beings. To achieve this the intelligent will must use its instrument — the mind. Here the Gita says: "He who controlling the senses by the mind, O Arjuna, without attachment engages with the organs of action in Yoga of action, he excels. Do thou do controlled action, for action is greater than inaction."[2]

But this is not enough, for the mind is itself under the subjection of the gunas and this kind of self-control can only be a palliative, never the full and complete self-mastery which we aspire for. Even the sage of discerning perception finds himself carried away by the senses. "Perfect security," says Sri Aurobindo, "can only be had by resorting to something higher than the sattwic quality, something higher than the discerning mind, to the Self, — not the philosopher's intelligent self, but the divine sage's spiritual self which is beyond the three Gunas. All must be consummated by a divine birth into the higher spiritual nature."[3]

If we do not want to retire altogether from Nature but fulfil our part in the cosmic dynamic play without being pushed between the dualities and without being their constant plaything, then this is the only remedy: to withdraw inwardly, to live silent in the silence of the impersonal and universal Self, to be one with the Eternal in His God-nature.

What is the truth behind this total reversion from the lower nature to the higher divine nature?

Sri Aurobindo explains: "When we live tranquilly poised in this self of impersonal wideness, then because that is vast, calm, quiescent, impersonal, our other little false self, our ego of action disappears into its largeness and we see that it is Nature that acts and not we, that all action is the action of Nature and can be nothing else."[4]

Still, the full solution of the problem of action has not been gained. It is not enough to have the realisation of the impersonal Self, because this in itself cannot stand as a guarantee for a continuance of actions in the world. The

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 101.
[2] Chap. III, Verses 7-8.
[3] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 189.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 438-39.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

experience of this state of consciousness separates itself trenchantly from that of life with all its dualities; and the seeker after liberation may remain content with that experience and say that now he has obtained the aim of all his aspirations, that all actions are burned away and that from now on he can dwell for ever silent and blissful in the supreme featureless Self.

This, indeed, would be the sole solution for ascetics of the Sankhya and Mayavada doctrines. The highest secret for them can only be the immutable, mpersonal Self, called in the Sankhya the witness Purusha, the giver of consent to Prakriti, but not partaking actively in the play to which he consents; and named in Mayavada the Nirguna Brahman, the static qualityless Self, without any connection at all with Nature and with the Saguna Brahman, the active qualitied self embracing Nature.

But this perception is due to a lack of the full spiritual vision, a lack which can only be remedied by ascending to a higher status where one is able to realise that these two apparently irreconcilable concepts do not correspond to any real division in Reality. In fact, these two, the status and immutability of the self and the action of the self and its mutability in Nature, actually coexist. And it is the great merit of the Gita, amongst other ancient scriptures, that it was able to reconcile these two in the highest reality of the Supreme Self, the Purushottama. The sages in the Upanishads also arrived at a complete synthesis when they stated that "all this is the Brahman" after they had affirmed that Brahman was "one without a second". Brahman is not only Nirguna but also Saguna — with qualities. Also the Shaivas and the Shaktas confirmed that Shakti, power in action, was inseparably associated with Shiva, the static inactive principle, and that these two actually were one.

Thus the God-seeker has to ascend to that higher poise of the Purushottama which contains and transcends the statuses of both the active and the inactive selves. They are aspects of the Divine Being in His universal manifestation, yet the Divine Himself is not bound by His manifestations but eternally beyond and master of His universal workings — ever free in His equality of self-possession. It is to this supreme status that we are asked to climb. This is the poise of the liberated man, the sovereign master of his divine nature.

In the Gita Sri Krishna gives the example of himself when he tries to convince Arjuna why he has to fight. In the same example he also cuts away the ground from under the ascetics pleading for inaction as the highest good. He says: "O Son of Pritha, I have no work that I need to do in all the three worlds, I have nothing that I have not gained and have yet to gain, and I abide verily in the paths of action. For if I did not abide sleeplessly in the paths of action, men follow in every way my path, these peoples would sink to destruction if I did not work and I should be the creator of confusion

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and slay these creatures."[1]

We have seen now that the crux of the whole matter is essentially a change of consciousness. What is most urgent and needful is that the aspirant after perfection has to ascend to the consciousness of the highest Divine Being and try to open himself to the light of Truth that is descending by the Divine Grace from above. The path of true austerity consists of aspiration to unite with the Supreme, rejection of all the obstacles that impede the progress towards that union and an unquestioning surrender to the Lord. In the initial discipline a certain asceticism is advisable, but it must be a seeing and sane rejection of those energies of Nature that cannot be converted into the Divine Nature. Also it is necessary to detach and dissociate oneself from worldly activities, but only to arrive at a greater mastery in the end when the whole being shall be organised harmoniously around the Divine Being in perfect self-consecration.

But true austerity can only be had when there is perfect surrender from the aspirant, when he is treading the "sunlit path" as Sri Aurobindo calls it. From then on there shall not be any more austerities to endure for the God-seeker.

Sri Krishna says: "Become my-minded, my lover and adorer, a sacrificer to Me, bow thyself to Me, to Me thou shalt come, this is my pledge and promise to thee, for dear art thou to Me. Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve."[2]

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

I. The God of the Religions and the One Divine

"The conception of the Divine as an external omnipotent Power who has 'created' the world and governs it like an absolute and arbitrary monarch — the Christian or Semitic conception — has never been mine; it contradicts too much my seeing and experience during thirty years of sadhana. It is against this conception that the atheistic objection is aimed, — for atheism in Europe has been a shallow and rather childish reaction against a shallow and childish exoteric religionism and its popular inadequate and crudely dogmatic notions. But when I speak of the Divine Will, I mean something different, — something that has descended here into an evolutionary world of Ignorance, standing at the back of things, pressing on the Darkness with its Light, leading things presently towards the best possible in the conditions of a world

[1] *Gita*, Chap. III, Verses 22-24.
[2] *Gita*, Chap. XVIII, Verses 65-66.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of Ignorance and leading it eventually towards a descent of a greater power of the Divine, which will be not an omnipotence held back and conditioned by the law of the world as it is, but in full action and therefore bringing the reign of light, peace, harmony, joy, love, beauty and Ananda, for these are the Divine Nature. The Divine Grace is there ready to act at every moment, but it manifests as one grows out of the Law of Ignorance into the Law of Light, and it is meant, not as an arbitrary caprice, however miraculous often its intervention, but as a help in that growth and a Light that leads and eventually delivers. If we take the facts of the world as they are and the facts of spiritual experience as a whole, neither of which can be denied or neglected, then I do not see what other Divine there can be. This Divine may lead us often through darkness, because the darkness is there in us and around us, but it is to the Light he is leading and not to anything else."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 174.)

*
**

"This world of our battle and labour is a fierce dangerous destructive devouring world in which life exists precariously and the soul and body of man move among enormous perils, a world in which by every step forward, whether we will it or no, something is crushed and broken, in which every breath of life is a breath too of death. To put away the responsibility for all that seems to us evil or terrible on the shoulders of a semi-omnipotent Devil, or to put it aside as part of Nature, making an unbridgeable opposition between world-nature and God-Nature, as if Nature were independent of God, or to throw the responsibility on man and his sins, as if he had a preponderant voice in the making of this world or could create anything against the will of God, are clumsily comfortable devices in which the religious thought of India has never taken refuge. We have to look courageously in the face of the reality and see that it is God and none else who has made this world in his being and that so he has made it. We have to see that Nature devouring her children, Time eating up the lives of creatures, Death universal and inelutcable and the violence of the Rudra forces in man and Nature are also the supreme Godhead in one of his cosmic figures. We have to see that God the bountiful and prodigal creator, God the helpful, strong and benignant preserver is also God the devourer and destroyer. The torment of the couch of pain and evil on which we are racked is his touch as much as happiness and sweetness and pleasure. It is only when we see with the eye of the complete union and feel this truth in the depths of our being that we can entirely discover behind that mask too the calm and beautiful face of the all-blissful Godhead and in this touch that tests our imperfection the touch of the friend and builder of the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

spirit in man. The discords of the worlds are God's discords and it is only by accepting and proceeding through them that we can arrive at the greater concords of his supreme harmony, the summits and thrilled vastnesses of his transcendent and his cosmic Ananda."

(*Essays on the Gita*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 13, pp.367-68.)

II. Asceticism and True Austerity

"It is almost universally supposed that spiritual life must necessarily be a life of ascetic spareness, a pushing away of all that is not absolutely needed for the bare maintenance of the body; and this is valid for a spiritual life which is in its nature and intention a life of withdrawal from life. Even apart from that ideal, it might be thought that the spiritual turn must always make for an extreme simplicity, because all else would be a life of vital desire and physical self-indulgence. But from a wider standpoint this is a mental standard based on the law of the Ignorance of which desire is the motive; to overcome the Ignorance, to delete the ego, a total rejection not only of desire but of all the things that can satisfy desire may intervene as a valid principle. But this standard or any mental standard cannot be absolute nor can it be binding as a law on the consciousness that has arisen above desire; a complete purity and self-mastery would be in the very grain of its nature and that would remain the same in poverty or in riches: for if it could be shaken or sullied by either, it would not be real or would not be complete. The one rule of the gnostic life would be the self-expression of the Spirit, the will of the Divine Being; that will, that self-expression could manifest through extreme simplicity or through extreme complexity and opulence or in their natural balance, — for beauty and plenitude, a hidden sweetness and laughter in things, a sunshine and gladness of life are also powers and expressions of the Spirit. In all directions the Spirit within determining the law of the nature would determine the frame of the life and its detail and circumstance."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 1066-67.)

*
**

"I agree that asceticism can be overdone. It has its place as one means — not the only one — of self-mastery; but asceticism that cuts away life is an exaggeration, though one that had many remarkable results which perhaps could hardly have come otherwise. The play of forces in this world is enigmatic, escaping from any rigid rule of the reason, and even an exaggeration like that is often employed to bring about something needed for the full deve-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

lopment of human achievement and knowledge and experience. But it was an exaggeration all the same and not, as it claimed to be, the indispensable path to the true goal."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 178.)

*
**

"Our renunciation must obviously be an inward renunciation; especially and above all, a renunciation of attachment and the craving of desire in the senses and the heart, of self-will in the thought and action and of egoism in the centre of the consciousness. For these things are the three knots by which we are bound to our lower nature and if we can renounce these utterly, there is nothing else that can bind us. Therefore attachment and desire must be utterly cast out; there is nothing in the world to which we must be attached, not wealth nor poverty, nor joy nor suffering, nor life nor death, nor greatness nor littleness, nor vice nor virtue, nor friend, nor wife, nor children, nor country, nor our work and mission, nor heaven nor earth, nor all that is within them or beyond them. And this does not mean that there is nothing at all that we shall love, nothing in which we shall take delight; for attachment is egoism in love and not love itself, desire is limitation and insecurity in a hunger for pleasure and satisfaction and not the seeking after the divine delight in things. A universal love we must have, calm and yet eternally intense beyond the brief vehemence of the most violent passion; a delight in things rooted in a delight in God that does not adhere to their forms but to that which they conceal in themselves and that embraces the universe without being caught in its meshes.[1]"

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 314-15.)

*
**

"It is true that the mere suppression or holding down of desire is not enough, not by itself truly effective, but that does not mean that desires are to be indulged; it means that desires have not merely to be suppressed, but to be rejected from the nature. In place of desire there must be a single-minded aspiration towards the Divine."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1401-02.)

*
**

[1] *Nirlipta.* The divine Ananda in things is *niṣkāma* and *nirlipta*, free from desire and therefore not attached.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Your theory is a mistaken one. The free expression of a passion may relieve the vital for a time, but at the same time it gives it a right to return always. It is not reduced at all. Suppression with inner indulgence in subtle forms is not a cure, but expression in outer indulgence is still less a cure. It is perfectly possible to go on without manifestation if one is resolute to arrive at a complete control, the control being not a mere suppression but an inner and outer rejection."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, p. 1402.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SEVENTEENTH SEMINAR

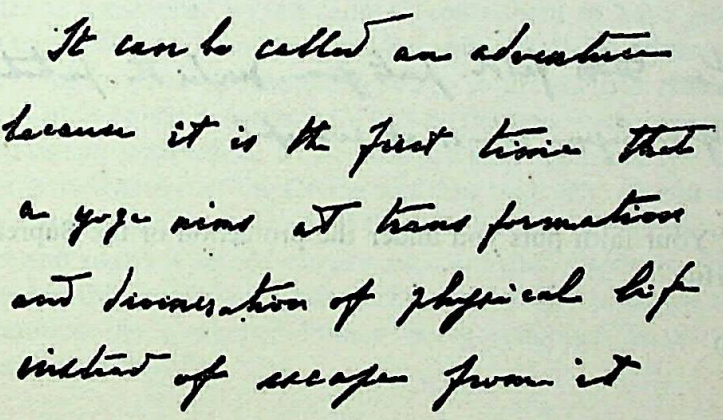
27 April 1969

SUBJECTS CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

1. "Why is our yoga an adventure?"
2. "The power of faith."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:

Q. 1: In what sense is our yoga an adventure?



A: "It can be called an adventure because it is the first time that a yoga aims at transformation and divinisation of physical life instead of escape from it."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Q. 2: Why is faith so supremely important in yoga?

Because we are aiming at something quite new that has never been done before –

A: "Because we are aiming at something quite new that has never been done before."

Q. 3: What is its determining power due to?

Your faith puts you under the protection of the Supreme who is all powerful.

A: "Your faith puts you under the protection of the Supreme who is all powerful."

26.4.1969

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHY IS OUR YOGA AN ADVENTURE?

SPEECH BY SURENDRA CHAUHAN

Human life is a progressive movement because there is in man an urge, an aspiration for gaining new dimensions of knowledge, a capacity and an indomitable will to discover the lasting solution of the great and central riddles of life. In the course of his long career on earth man has attempted innumerable adventures to fathom the supreme secret of life. Achievements of past spirituality and of modern science have undoubtedly carried us towards some law of truth and harmony. But these achievements have given us only partial solutions to our eternal problems. Buddha sought to have peace of Nirvana by the extinction of life. Shankara very strangely turned the world-existence into an unreal Maya and felt the Brahman to be the sole reality. Well, I have not much to say about the gospel of materialism and other powerful but far less effective movements of the modern world which do not know even the basic truths of existence. So we cannot expect them to have given us any satisfying truth. Briefly, we can say that in spite of all the adventures made in the past and the present, man has failed to secure the true solution of the problems of life. This is because there was no patience and courage to tackle the issue in its true significance, that is to say, a glad acceptance of life and the world as a manifestation of the Divine and thus real. The idea of transforming terrestrial creation was not at all thought of as an imperative necessity. This great and supreme secret was almost completely hidden before the advent of Sri Aurobindo. So the fundamental problems of existence which have always haunted the awakened human being remained unanswered. The Mother puts them vividly:

Why to be born if it is only to die?
Why to live if it is only to suffer?
Why to love if it is only to be separated?
Why to think if it is only to err?
Why to act if it is only to commit mistakes?

Well, at the present critical juncture in human evolution comes Sri Aurobindo's great and profound Integral Yoga — a yoga of transformation which promises to give the lasting solution for which we have always yearned. "Integral yoga begins where other yogas end." For the aim of other yogas is to seek partial liberation and they are limited in their scope and vision. The urgent necessity for them is to seek the quickest possible libera-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tion of the soul and to get away from the worldly existence to some distant plane to enjoy eternal blissful repose. Liberation of nature and transformation of matter into the veritable and glorified mansion of the spirit, which is the aim of the Integral Yoga, is a very difficult task and a perilous adventure. It needs an exceptionally arduous Tapasya to accomplish this work. But our yoga, whose central motive is also a logical necessity in accordance with the truth of evolutionary progression, seeks to accomplish this task. Our yoga starts with the truth that complete liberation in the evolution of the spiritual man is not only a revelation of the spirit, but also a radical and integral transformation of nature. The sadhaka of the Integral Yoga has always to remember the inspired mantra of the Vedic rishi: "*bhūri aspaṣṭa kartvam*; there is a height still to be reached, a wideness still to be covered by the eye of vision, the wing of the will, the self-affirmation of the spirit in the material universe."[1] To put it precisely, our yoga seeks to evolve not only spiritual man out of mere mental man, but the supramental being beyond the spiritual man. The Divine Mother invites us to embark on the great adventure of participating in the new creation, establishing in ourselves the supramental consciousness. But this "is a new road, that has never been traced; none went by that way, none did that. It is a beginning, a universal beginning. Therefore it is an adventure absolutely unexpected and unforeseeable."[2]

But how do we undertake this adventure? What is the principle and process of it? The aim is to scale all the degrees of consciousness from the ordinary mental to a supramental and divine consciousness. And when the ascension is complete, we have to return to the material world infusing into it the supramental force and consciousness so that this earth may be gradually transformed into a supramental and divine world. Thus our yoga seeks its supreme consummation in a supramental transformation and a new creation. It is an adventure for the very simple reason that it seeks to realise, to fulfil an ideal which was never attempted in the past; that is to say, a radical and total change of consciousness in an increasing force and by progressive stages.

But let us not forget that it is not an ordinary adventure. Transformation of nature is a formidable task and demands unflinching strength, courage, inexhaustible patience and an untiring endurance. Difficulties are indeed great and obstinate on the way to the great fulfilment; yet one cannot rest content with a partial result because one might almost say that on this way nothing is accomplished unless all is accomplished. If the aim of the Integral Yoga were to be as that of other yogas — to have some partial spiritual realisation — then it would be no more an adventure. It would be a retreading if not a monotonous repetition of what has already been achieved in the past in the

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 890.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1957, p. 99.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

realm of spiritual experiences. The very character and spirit of our yoga expects from its adventurers a daring and fearless leap into the unknown. It does not tolerate in the least a timid and pitiful alliance or compromise with the past, however glorious it may have been. Ours is "an endless adventure of consciousness and joy", ever new because the delight of the spirit is ever new.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

I. Why is Our Yoga an Adventure?

"Our yoga is not a retreading of old walks, but a spiritual adventure."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 101.) Sri Aurobindo

*
**

"When the physical substance will be supramentalised, to be born on earth in a body will not be a cause of inferiority, rather the contrary, there will be gained a plenitude which could not be obtained otherwise.

"But all that is of the future, a future that has begun but will take some time before realising itself integrally. In the meanwhile, we are in a very special situation, extremely special which has had no precedent. We are attending on the birth of a new world, altogether young, altogether weak — weak not in its essence, but in its external manifestation — not yet recognised, not yet felt, denied by most; but it is there, it is there endeavouring to grow and quite sure of the result. Yet, the road to reach there is a new road, that has never before been traced; none went by that way, none did that. It is a beginning, a universal beginning. Therefore it is an adventure absolutely unexpected and unforeseeable.

"There are people who love adventure, and to them I give a call and I tell them:

"I invite you to the great adventure, and in this adventure you are not to repeat spiritually what others have done before us, because our adventure begins from beyond that stage. We are for a new creation, entirely new, carrying in it all the unforeseen, all risks, all hazards, — a true adventure of which the goal is sure victory, but of which the way is unknown and has to be traced out step by step in the unexplored. It is something that has never been in the present universe and will never be in the same manner. If that interests you, well, embark. What will happen tomorrow, I do not know.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"You must leave behind whatever has been foreseen, whatever has been designed, whatever has been built up, and then on the march into the unknown. Come what may!"

(*Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1957, pp. 97, 99.) THE MOTHER

II. THE POWER OF FAITH

"Faith is the soul's witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us, even in the absence of all indications, feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving. This thing within us can last even when there is no fixed belief in the mind, even when the vital struggles and revolts and refuses. Who is there that practises the yoga and has not his periods, long periods of disappointment and failure and disbelief and darkness? But there is something that sustains him and even goes on in spite of himself, because it feels that what it followed after was yet true and it more than feels, it knows. The fundamental faith in yoga is this, inherent in the soul, that the Divine exists and the Divine is the one thing to be followed after — nothing else in life is worth having in comparison with that. So long as a man has that faith, he is marked for the spiritual life and I will say that, even if his nature is full of obstacles and crammed with denials and difficulties, and even if he has many years of struggle, he is marked out for success in the spiritual life."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 573.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"The faith in spiritual things that is asked of the sadhak is not an ignorant but a luminous faith, a faith in light and not in darkness. It is called blind by the sceptical intellect because it refuses to be guided by outer appearances or seeming facts, — for it looks for the truth behind, — and because it does not walk on the crutches of proof and evidence. It is an intuition, an intuition not only waiting for experience to justify it, but leading towards experience. If I believe in self-healing, I shall after a time find out the way to heal myself. If I have a faith in transformation, I can end by laying my hand on and unravelling the process of transformation. But if I begin with doubt and go on with more doubt, how far am I likely to go on the journey?"

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, p. 166.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Anything else one may doubt but that he who desires only the Divine shall reach the Divine is a certitude and more certain than two and two make four. That is the faith every sadhak must have at the bottom of his heart, supporting him through every stumble and blow and ordeal. It is only false ideas still casting their shadows on your mind that prevent you from having it. Push them aside and the back of the difficulty will be broken."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 585.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"The way to get faith and all things else is to insist on having them and refuse to flag or despair or give up until one has them — it is the way by which everything has been got since this difficult earth began to have thinking and aspiring creatures upon it. It is to open always, always to the Light and turn one's back on the Darkness. It is to refuse the voices that say persistently, 'You cannot, you shall not, you are incapable, you are the puppet of a dream,' — for these are the enemy voices, they cut one off from the result that was coming, by their strident clamour and then triumphantly point to the barrenness of the result as a proof of their thesis. The difficulty of the endeavour is a known thing, but the difficult is not the impossible — it is the difficult that has always been accomplished and the conquest of difficulties makes up all that is valuable in the earth's history. In the spiritual endeavour also it shall be so."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 577-78.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"And yet faith is necessary throughout and at every step because it is a needed assent of the soul and without this assent there can be no progress. Our faith must first be abiding in the essential truth and principles of the Yoga, and even if this is clouded in the intellect, despondent in the heart, outwearied and exhausted by constant denial and failure in the desire of the vital mind, there must be something in the innermost soul which clings and returns to it, otherwise we may fall on the path or abandon it from weakness and inability to bear temporary defeat, disappointment, difficulty and peril. In the Yoga as in life it is the man who persists unwearied to the last in the face of every defeat and disillusionment and of all confronting, hostile and contradicting events and powers who conquers in the end and finds his faith justified because to the soul and Shakti in man nothing is impossible."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 745.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Doubt is not a sport to indulge in with impunity; it is a poison which drop by drop corrodes the soul."

(*Words of the Mother*, 1949, p. 227.) THE MOTHER

⁂

"This faith we must have and develop to perfection that all things are the workings under the universal conditions of a supreme self-knowledge and wisdom, that nothing done in us or around us is in vain or without its appointed place and just significance, that all things are possible when the Ishwara as our supreme Self and Spirit takes up the action and that all that has been done before and all that he will do hereafter was and will be part of his infallible and foreseeing guidance and intended towards the fruition of our Yoga and our perfection and our life work. This faith will be more and more justified as the higher knowledge opens, we shall begin to see the great and small significances that escaped our limited mentality and faith will pass into knowledge. Then we shall see beyond the possibility of doubt that all happens within the working of the one Will and that will was also wisdom because it develops always the true workings in life of the self and nature. The highest state of the assent, the *śraddhā* of the being will be when we feel the presence of the Ishwara and feel all our existence and consciousness and thought and will and action in his hand and consent in all things and with every part of our self and nature to the direct and immanent and occupying will of the Spirit. And that highest perfection of the *śraddhā* will also be the opportunity and perfect foundation of a divine strength: it will base, when complete, the development and manifestation and the works of the luminous supramental Shakti."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 21, p. 753.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"If you keep your faith unshaken and your heart always open to me, then all difficulties, however great, will contribute to the greater perfection of your being."

(*Words of the Mother*, 1949, p. 236.) THE MOTHER

⁂

"Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles."

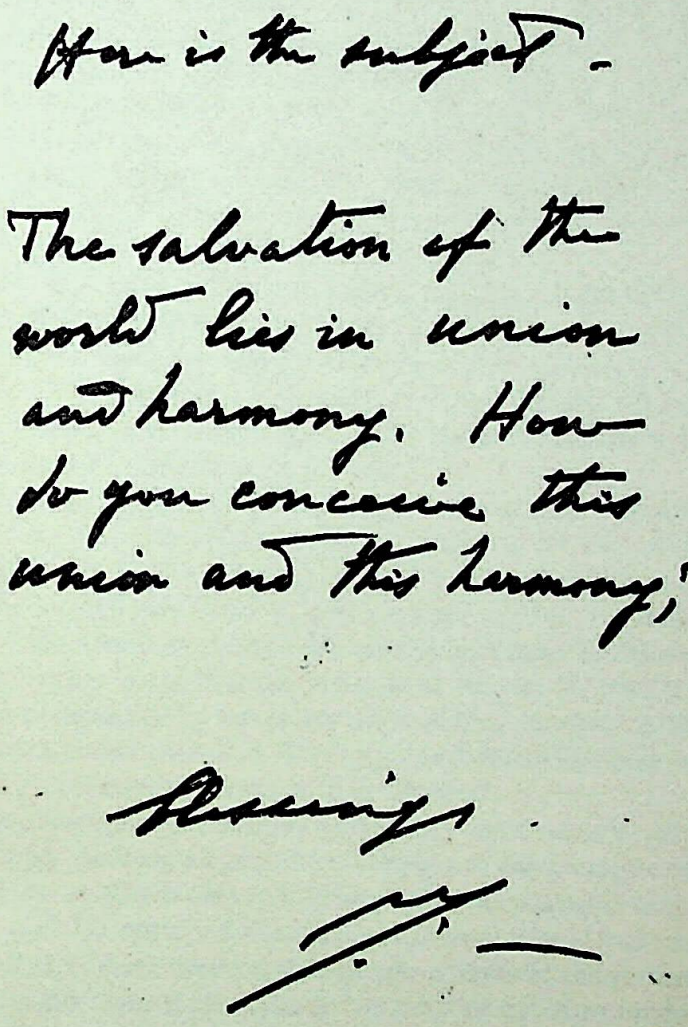
(*The Ideal of Human Unity*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 543.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

EIGHTEENTH SEMINAR

23 November 1969

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:



"The salvation of the world lies in union and harmony.
How do you conceive this union and this harmony?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD LIES IN UNION AND HARMONY. HOW DO YOU CONCEIVE THIS UNION AND THIS HARMONY?

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The paramount importance at the present juncture of the subject, which the Mother has given for this Seminar, is quite obvious, for the forces of division and violent conflict have at the present moment swelled to such menacing proportions all over the world that unless some drastic measures are undertaken to curb them effectively and to establish adequate unity and harmony on a secure basis, there is every possibility that humanity may suffer a catastrophic disaster. "Unite or perish" — this is the imminent warning held up before humanity by the Time-Spirit which will not brook any delay if humanity still continues to turn a deaf ear to it.

But though the need for unity is imminent, there is hardly a clear understanding of its true nature and the proper means to realise it effectively, even among those who bear the responsibility of leading humanity in this crucial hour. Many conceptions and formulas are advocated, offering solutions which eventually prove to be failures or at the best palliatives because they fail to tackle the problem at its very roots.

It is therefore of the utmost importance to have a clear conception of the true unity and harmony that is at present required for the salvation of the world. For us this has a special significance because the realisation of world-unity forms an essential part of the life-work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. World-Unity was one of the cherished dreams of Sri Aurobindo as mentioned by him in his birthday message of August 15, 1947[1], and also of the Mother as explained by her in her short writing entitled "A Dream"[2]. In fact our International Centre of Education and Auroville have been started in order to give a concrete form to this "dream".

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother called their endeavour to achieve world-unity a "dream" because all great ideals appear to the average ordinary mind like unreal imaginations impossible to realise in practical actual life. But how many such "dreams" of the past which were considered impossible by the past humanity have become commonplace facts of the present day!

Also we must remember that a "dream" of Sri Aurobindo cannot be put in the same category as the dreams of other idealists. Let me remind you here of an answer which the Mother gave to a questioner who expressed doubt about the success of the Auroville project because of the great difficulties

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 404-06.

[2] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), pp.100-101.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

involved in its execution. The Mother said: "You say that Auroville is a dream. Yes, it is a 'dream' of the Lord and generally these 'dreams' turn out to be *true* — much more true than the human so-called realities!"[1] (20.5.66)

To this I would like to add Sri Aurobindo's own assertion about the success of his world-action which applies with equal force not only to his "dream" of world-unity but also to the other four "dreams" mentioned in his birthday message of August 15, 1947:

"I have never had a strong and persistent will for anything to happen in the world — I am not speaking of personal things — which did not eventually happen even after delay, defeat or even disaster."[2]

Those who have faith in Sri Aurobindo should therefore remember that his "dream" of world-unity carries with it the invincible realising power of his Will, the Will of the Supreme Lord, and that therefore it is bound to be achieved whatever may be the obstacles standing in the way.

But our faith in Sri Aurobindo must be accompanied by a clear understanding of his conception of the true world-unity and of the right means of effectively realising it.

It will be our endeavour in this Seminar to explain Sri Aurobindo's vision of world-unity and harmony as delineated by him in his writings.

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

Will Durant, the well-known philosopher and historian, has said about civilization that it "begins where chaos and insecurity ends".[3] Civilization then has not yet begun or else it has ended with us. And yet if we cast a sweeping look across the corridor of history we inevitably perceive that chaos and insecurity are no new features of our century alone. On the other hand we observe that an age of anarchy has been more often than not an age of transition. The age of the French Revolution, for instance, was such a transitional period. It is not therefore an inane adage to say that night is darkest before dawn. But our night, even to a superficial watcher, is the darkest with a fatal possibility of mass annihilation. The air is reeking with gunpowder. A number of nations are still engaged in a ruthless "battle of destiny in a sea of blood under a blazing sky", to quote the rhetoric of Mr. Nasser.

In the past the evils of destruction were insular, threatening one or a few

[1] *White Roses* (1973), p. 143.
[2] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 169.
[3] *Our Oriental Heritage*, p. 1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

nations sporadically while humanity at large was left alone. The culture and ideas of one nation did not usually affect another in a distant part of the world. But today nations have come intimately close to one another, owing to the rapidity of technological progress. It is no more possible to remain isolated by shutting doors on all foreign currents of life. Even the impenetrable jungle life of savages has been explored and contacts established, although such contacts on both sides have not been always very happy. "The white man when roasted tastes like ripe banana," Pierre Loti was told by an old Polynesian chief of Tahiti.[1] I am afraid a white man will not find this quite palatable.

As a result of this coming-together our problems have assumed universal dimensions such as have never been encountered in the past. Now by force of circumstances man has been led to conceive an ideal of unity and harmony. And, indeed, never before was the ideal of world union so vocal as today. One main feature of the foreign policy of this age is peaceful co-existence. The much faltering League of Nations and then the United Nations Organisation have been conceived by the same urge towards peace and unity.

Dissatisfied with this life of chaos and disharmony a number of modern thinkers have conjured up several images of an ideal life. These efforts, however ineffective they may be, at least hint at a recognition of existing problems and an attempt to resolve them. By scrutinising these fumbling efforts we may grasp their *lacunae* and caution ourselves against further repetitions of similar slips.

In 1883 Kay Robinson offered us a somewhat difficult-to-stomach glimpse of future man. "The human being of the future," he would have us believe, "will be a toothless, bald, toeless creature with flaccid muscles and limbs almost incapable of locomotion."[2] It is true that such a toothless creature "incapable of locomotion", even if gruesome to look at, would certainly be less garrulous and no jingoist. Peace and harmony will reign on earth!

In more recent times thinkers like Aldous Huxley and others have given us a science-oriented image of the future. Albert Rosenfeld, for instance, says, "We are now entering an era when, as a result of new scientific discoveries, some mind-boggling things are likely to happen." He then adds, "man's power will have become truly godlike. Just as he has been able, through chemistry, to create a variety of synthetic materials that never existed in nature, so may he, through genetic surgery, bring into being new species of creatures never before seen or imagined in the universe — beings better adapted, if he wishes to survive on the surface of Jupiter, or on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean."[3] All these will be the results of offspring "*in vitro*

[1] Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage* p. 10.
[2] Quoted by E. Carpenter in *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*, p. 19.
[3] *Life*, 7 July 1969, p. 40.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

i.e. laboratory glass-ware." The writer observes that such *in vitro* offspring will raise great many social problems. Necessarily in a relationless and loveless world, each man is likely to feel a lonely entity — a windowless monad! — having no common bond to establish unity. This will rather increase than solve the problem of harmony.

Next, an intimate knowledge of savages has led great many thinkers to extol jungle life: "Nature must once more become his home," advocated Edward Carpenter.[1] According to him our civilization has become diseased. "Whatever we have—to get more; wherever we are — to go somewhere else"; this attitude is the very symptom of ill-health. If we want to establish harmony and entirety we must recuperate from this ill-health. Primitive peoples, it has been seen, are almost immune from physical diseases. It is only when our sophisticated "civilization touches them, they die like flies from the smallpox, drink, and worse evils it brings along with it, and often its mere contact is sufficient to destroy whole races".[2] Also in the moral sphere they are equally sound. Among most of the primitive peoples land and food are shared by all. The words "mine" and "thine" are unknown among some savages. Once when a bushman was told about a poor man in London, the savage exclaimed, "How is it? No food? No friend? No house to live in? Where did he grow? Are there no houses belonging to his friend?"[3] Clive Bell informs us, "Theft would seem to have been unknown among North American Indians till the coming of the whites."[4] To an Andaman Islander lying is "a great sin".[5]

There then we seem to have an ideal society of harmony and brotherhood which our civilization will do well to emulate. But let us pause and deliberate a while before such a picture of primitive life gets the better of us. When we give it a closer look we unmistakably perceive that it is a life preoccupied with physical needs. The chief characteristics of primitive barbarians are, to quote Sri Aurobindo, "To take the body and the physical life as the one thing important, to judge manhood by the physical strength, development and prowess, to be at the mercy of the instincts which rise out of the physical inconscient, to despise knowledge as a weakness and inferioriy or look on it as a peculiarity and no necessary part of the conception of manhood, this is the mentality of the barbarian."[6] Besides, reverting humanity to a life in nature is no more possible. According to Sri Aurobindo, that cycle of evolution has permanently passed away.[7]

Then there are utopian thinkers who have dreamt of a consummate society, right from the time of Plato and culminating in H.G. Wells. Utopia

[1] *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*, p. 59. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[3] Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage*, p. 17.
[4] *Civilization*, p. 20. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[6] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 67. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

has always been conceived in terms of a city. The Greeks, particularly, knew that what Aristotle called "a common life for a better end" could be lived better in "the city" than anywhere else. "The men who dwell in the city are my teachers," said Socrates. Cities are burgeoning like mushrooms in our time and even Hitler desired to make a colossus of Berlin and christen it Germania. But in spite of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle life in a modern city is a nerve-jangling experience. "It is a mismanaged ant-heap, rather than a community fit for human habitation." [1] Thus ideas of Utopia always floated as charming bubbles in the air while life ran its normal course.

What then should we conclude? Is man eternally chained to Ixion's wheel and is there no salvation? Or is it that we have missed the right key to unity and harmony?

Sri Aurobindo points out that the seed of life's redemption lies hidden in life itself. For when we probe life with keen eyes to search for truth we perceive something higher and nobler secret within it and seeking to assert itself, tearing the covers of our dark crudities. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "We are vaguely aware of something that is there in us or seeking to be, something other than what has been thus made, a Spirit self-existent, self-determining, pushing the nature towards the creation of an image of its own occult perfection or Idea of perfection. There is something that grows in us in answer to this demand, that strives to become the image of a divine Somewhat, and is impelled also to labour at the world outside that has been given to it and to remake that too in a greater image, in the image of its own spiritual and mental and vital growth, to make our world too something created according to our own mind and self-conceiving spirit, something new, harmonious, perfect." [2]

If then we wish to achieve true unity we must seek it within our consciousness. Religion, which deals with our inner life, would seem to be the right instrument for its realisation. But here too we observe that all orthodox religions tend to end up in rigid and exclusive formulæ and get fossilised while the spirit departs. For, religion instead of recognising the all-inclusiveness of the supreme truth dwells in partial truth which leaves an inconclusive dichotomy between the Spirit and this material life. No past religions could therefore apply themselves to transform this life of division and strife. On the contrary they sought to escape from life or "looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter." [3]

[1] "What Makes a City Great", in *Time*, 14 November 1969.
[2] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1020.
[3] Sri Aurobindo, *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 543.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

It is to solve this ancient quarrel between life and Spirit that Sri Aurobindo has blazed a new path — the path of Integral Yoga — leading to the transfiguration of life into the formula of divine existence. In the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo we endeavour to live an integrated life: a spiritual life within and a physical life without, supported by the living inner Spirit. It becomes an integral life because we seek to integrate physical existence and spiritual inwardness. But here again Sri Aurobindo warns us that, to find a spiritual life on earth, it can never be enough that "only a few climb into the free air and light" while many remain doomed to the lower existence. The mass consciousness is still preoccupied with physical and vital cravings and if a spiritual community is our goal we can ill afford to abandon the mass. The latter has to be taught to live by the true mind and the psychic being. Here again as elsewhere, Sri Aurobindo cautions us against a possible danger. Mind while receiving the higher truth always distorts it into so many irreconcilably opposite formulas. Thus the ideal of liberty remains ever incompatible with the ideal of oneness and brotherhood. Mind must recognise its limitation and realise that the true knower is not mind but the Spirit. "Then only," says Sri Aurobindo, "will the real, the decisive endeavour begin and life and the world be studied, known, dealt with in all directions as the self-finding and self-expression of the Spirit. Then only will a spiritual age of mankind be possible." [1]

And yet Sri Aurobindo recognises the great and noble achievements of the mind. Mind's "faith in humanity and its earthly future" has been a great redeeming feature of human progress. The result was a great deal of social well-being. It raised the condition of the "depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions."[2] But mind in spite of its lofty achievements could not cure life of its evils. Peace still remains an uneasy "interlude" before a potential war. It is so because mind fails to overcome human egoism. It is only when ego will submit itself to the dictates of the Spirit that real freedom and perfection will become possible. But here we meet a possibility of liquidating one's individuality into a transcendental consciousness in the process of overcoming one's individual ego. Although such a possibility does exist, it cannot be the ultimate goal of the Integral Yoga. Nirvana is not our end. Liberated from the ego the seeker of the integral truth finds his true individual self and lives by the law of his own divine nature and at the same time partakes of the plurality of the divine existence. We have then a spiritual society where each individual liberated from ego recognises a human brotherhood existing "in the soul and by the soul".[3]

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 239.
[2] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), pp. 543-44. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 546-47.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

It is to make such a spiritual life of harmony and unity possible that our Ashram and the city of Auroville have been founded. In August 1954, in a short writing entitled "A Dream",[1] the Mother said, "There should be somewhere upon earth a place that no nation can claim as its sole property, a place where all human beings of goodwill, sincere in their aspiration, could live freely as citizens of the world, obeying one single authority, that of the supreme Truth, a place of peace, concord, harmony."[1] And then towards the end she adds, "Yet, this dream is on the way of becoming a reality. That is exactly what we are seeking to do at the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo on a small scale, in proportion to our modest means."[2] This dream, on an extended scale, is being given a concrete shape in Auroville. "Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual Human Unity," says the Mother in the Auroville Charter.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"The perfect solution of the problem of Life is not likely to be realised by association, interchange and accommodations of love alone or through the law of the mind and the heart alone. It must come by a... status of life in which the eternal unity of the many is realised through the spirit and the conscious foundation of all the operations of life is laid no longer in the divisions of body, nor in the passions and hungers of the vitality, nor in the groupings and the imperfect harmonies of the mind, nor in a combination of all these, but in the unity and freedom of the Spirit."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, p. 206.)

*
**

"A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence."

(*The Ideal of Human Unity*, Cent. Ed., Vol.15, p. 555.)

*
**

[1] [2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1954.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"It is the divine love ... that, extended in inward feeling to the Divine in man and all creatures in an active universal equality, will be more potent for the perfectibility of life and a more real instrument than the ineffective mental ideal of brotherhood can ever be. It is this poured out into acts that could alone create a harmony in the world and a true unity between all creatures; all else strives in vain towards that end so long as Divine Love has not disclosed itself as the heart of the delivered manifestation in terrestrial Nature."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 155.)

⁂

"It is only a divine love and unity that can possess in the light what the human forms of these things seek for in the darkness. For the true unity is not merely an association and agglomeration like that of physical cells joined by a life of common interests; it is not even an emotional understanding, sympathy, solidarity or close drawing together. Only then are we really unified with those separated from us by the divisions of Nature, when we annul the division and find ourselves in that which seemed to us not ourselves. Association is a vital and physical unity; its sacrifice is that of mutual aid and concessions. Nearness, sympathy, solidarity create a mental, moral and emotional unity; theirs is a sacrifice of mutual support and mutual gratifications. But the true unity is spiritual; its sacrifice is a mutual self-giving, an interfusion of our inner substance."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 99-100.)

⁂

"After all, the spiritual and cultural is the only enduring unity and it is by a persistent mind and spirit much more than by an enduring physical body and outward organisation that the soul of a people survives. This is a truth the positive western mind may be unwilling to understand or concede, and yet its proofs are written across the whole story of the ages....

"But spiritual unity is a large and flexible thing and does not insist like the political and external on centralisation and uniformity; rather it lives diffused in the system and permits readily a great diversity and freedom of life."

(*The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 14, pp. 367-68.)

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Harmony is the natural rule of the Spirit, it is the inherent law and spontaneous consequence of unity in multiplicity, of unity in diversity, of a various manifestation of oneness. In a pure and blank unity there could be indeed no place for harmony, for there is nothing to harmonise; in a complete or a governing diversity there must be either discord or a fitting together of differences, a constructed harmony. But in a gnostic unity in multiplicity the harmony would be there as a spontaneous expression of the unity, and this spontaneous expression presupposes a mutuality of consciousness aware of other consciousness by a direct inner contact and interchange."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 1040-41.)

⁂

"In the founding of human life upon the supramental realisation of conscious unity with the One and with all in our being and in all its members humanity must seek its final good and salvation."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, p. 217.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

NINETEENTH SEMINAR

22 February 1970

SUBJECT APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:*

"What is the big change for which the world is preparing? How can one help it?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWERS:

Q. 1: What is the big change for which the world is preparing?

a change of consciousness
and when our consciousness will change
we will know what the change is.

A: "A change of consciousness. And when our consciousness will change we will know what the change is."

Q. 2: How can one help for this change to come?

the change does not need our help to come,
but we need to open ourselves to the consciousness
so that its coming is not in vain for us.

A: "The change does not need our help to come, but we need to open ourselves to the consciousness so that its coming is not in vain for us."

* This subject is related to the Mother's New Year message for 1970: "The world is preparing for a big change. Will you help?"

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS THE BIG CHANGE FOR WHICH THE WORLD IS PREPARING? HOW CAN ONE HELP IT?

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The subject of this Seminar is related to the Mother's message for this year. This message appears, at a cursory view, to be a simple one. But a deeper regard would reveal its profound spiritual significance. We shall attempt to seize this underlying significance.

At the outset we have to ask, what is this 'big change' the Mother is referring to? Next, what is the help she expects from us? Lastly, how is this message related to the other messages which have come from her in previous years?

The active and dynamic descent of the supramental Truth into the terrestrial scene which occurred in 1956 is slowly preparing the world for a colossal revolution, the supramental revolution, which will culminate in a total reversal of the consciousness and a complete transformation of life. This revolution involves an intensification of the conflict of occult forces, some of which are contrary to the progress of the cosmic evolution, while others aid its advancement. So long as the supramental Power had not manifested, this conflict was neither imminent nor acute. But with its manifestation, which is a continuous process, we are facing problems which were unknown or at least not in the forefront. These problems are of a diverse character. And so long as man is not prepared to face them squarely and tackle them, this acute individual and cosmic conflict will continue, feeding on our indecision, our ill-will, our hostility, our fear, in short the composite of our limitations.

But this is not the whole aspect of the thing. Gradually the supramental Power is assuming unprecedented dynamism and is seeking to fulfil itself by a greater and fuller manifestation which calls for man's greater and greater receptivity to it. Also it has come so close that it can no longer be satisfied with working in the higher reaches of our being; it seeks to enter into contact with the whole of man's nature, so that it may become its transparent instrument, instead of remaining an obscuring mask.

This change is both a transcendence and a reversal. For, sometimes, growing greater than our lower nature is not a conquest of it but a psychological escape into the higher reaches of our being. But in our yoga we envisage a total reversal of all we are, of all we term humanity or rather animal humanity. This may appear to be too enormous a step, but from the spiritual point of view, it is the only logical forward step of evolution. For evolution cannot cry a halt at the human level and needs must pass into something

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

greater, more true, more living and more dynamic. All of Nature's efforts, conscious or unconscious, have been directed towards this reversal, this transcendence, this great movement of transformation. At the present moment the problem has become so insistent and urgent, that unless man exceeds himself he may very well suffer self-annihilation. The world's current unrest, the great universal disequilibrium, should make us pause and reconsider our present position, our future trend, the whole gamut of our existence. There must be definitely something radically wrong somewhere in us that has generated such an all-pervading disturbance. Are not these disturbances the outward manifestations of some deep and lurking malady within us, which we have failed to detect and exterminate and which can only be cured by a profound spiritual change of our being and consciousness? That is why the Mother gives her call to participate in this change, instead of being forced to it by the pressure of circumstances. She seeks our glad collaboration. For the Power that is at work will brook no dalliance, negligence or half-hearted effort. Skeptics may well doubt the capacity of man to change himself, unaided by any agent beyond him. The answer is clear. The stupendous power of the Supermind is at our elbow and if we are really determined to change ourselves, a fraction of that power will be sufficient to change us entirely. The central difficulty is our unwillingness to abandon our past moorings. We are too much enamoured of our pettinesses and limitations to leave them for the wider horizons of the Spirit. In the twilight of our lower nature, we feel safe, safe from the intolerant light that can consume all our robes of clinging ignorance. In fact the wisdom of skeptics is a mask to conceal these limitations. Our doubts, our questionings, our misgivings, our vacillations are only movements to mark time and evade somehow the truth. This way of being and living has continued long. We have, under many pretexts, warded off the issue. But now the time has come when some definite step must be taken. This is the "help" the Mother is calling for. Actually this help is not an external aid, but an endeavour to help ourselves by becoming sincere, by becoming single-minded in our effort and will. Let us also not forget that this is the only way by which we can help the world to change. Let us by our participation, our conscious willingness to change, help the world movement, which in turn will aid us. But the option is there always to retrace our steps and halt. The result would be disastrous to us, for the Time-Spirit is rushing forward and if at some given point we suddenly halted, our nature itself would revolt against such a reactionary step.

Let us not forget that life is perpetual movement. Hence if we must survive, we must continue to move forward. And now there is only one great movement forward, the movement towards the Truth of the Spirit. All other movements are either inconsequential, wrong or perverse.

As in the life of the individual, so also in the life of the nation, and of

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the entire humanity, at a certain crucial moment the need to make a choice to move in a forward or a backward direction becomes imperative. Either of these choices must be definite and final. The failure to make this choice has created all our present problems. This means either we have not discovered the true aim of our life, or else we are too hesitant or lethargic to make a final and resolute decision. Such a state of affairs has continued too long but now it cannot continue.

The Mother's message this year is not a message apart from those which have come from her in previous years. In fact, this message is in continuation of those earlier ones bearing on the same theme of the supramental descent and its insistence on transformation and a call for our participation in that process. From 1956 onwards, there has been the supramental Power's greater and greater manifestation on the terrestrial scene, working more and more intensely upon the human consciousness. It is now working in the cells of the material body to alter the whole face of physical existence. The present message is a clarion call to the aspirants to take an unequivocal plunge into that process of transformation which will culminate in the accomplishment of the next step of man's evolutionary destiny.

For those who are sincere, the path is open to a greater and surer Truth. But those who are insincere or hypocritical, have baser aims or wish to exploit the divine help for personal or egoistic ends, would find the hammer of the titan crushing them, the feet of the cosmic 'dancer of Time' annihilating them. This message is a definite pointer to sincerity and an all-embracing acceptance of the Truth.

A new reign of the Spirit is imminent. The age of reason is a past and spent force. We need a new way of organisation, of orientation, of a new becoming in life, thought and body. Already in the West there is a blind but insistent urge to surpass reason, which has given rise to innumerable new movements in art, life and culture. Unfortunately, these movements are limited by a lack of perception, of awareness of the new Truth, with the result that they get misdirected and end in frustration. What is needed is a conscious opening to the new light: we must be unegoistic enough to become its conscious vessels so that a new age of the Spirit could take birth by this awareness and instrumentality. We must be ready to sacrifice all we are and all we have at the altar of this new descending power, instead of keeping ourselves shut, limited within our ignorant ego-centricity.

This new age that is at our door-step is for the young in spirit and heart, for all those who seek a great and new adventure into the unknown — the Spirit with its teeming possibilities. The senile rationalist, the sombre doubting individual shall have no place in it.

What will be the effect of this change and this collaboration? Our limitations and our slavery to human ills in all spheres of life and consciousness

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

will disappear. One radical gesture, one ardent appeal, one decisive opening to the new Truth can yield unimaginable results. Ultimately even death as the physical end will cease to be inevitable, if the soul so chooses, and the soul's progress will be unhampered and free. And, lastly, the gulf between Matter and Spirit will be bridged, the way opened to an unbelievable fulfilment of the supreme promise — the promise made by the Divine to terrestrial Nature.

SPEECH BY BASABJIT DESHMUKH

In the past, there have been critical periods of transition, during which the consciousness has evolved from a lower to a higher stage. But the present impending crisis is of paramount importance because in this step, mankind will realise all its fond dreams of perfection and immortality. This is the Hour of God, the Golden Age of Light for which humanity has continuously been yearning. The past transitions had been brief glimpses of the Spirit, followed by the preparation for perfection of the external instruments of the human nature. Once their perfection is achieved, the Supramental Age will manifest in all its splendour. This Supramental Age will enable God to guide the world with his own hands; the veiled Ruler will become the unveiled Charioteer.

The Hour of God is the inevitable destiny of earthly evolution. But man will have to prepare himself and aspire, by his own conscious free choice, to receive the supramental Truth in him. This is necessary because man has a self-conscious mind. He insists on participating in his evolutionary development and compels Nature to work in close association with him. Nor will the Divine compel man, for freedom is the fundamental right of the self-conscious being. Man is left free to consent or not to consent; if he does not, he will prove to be a failure in fulfilling his evolutionary destiny. The splendid privilege is his, it is up to him to take full advantage of it. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental creator."[1]

We are now blessed with the Divine Presence on earth and a little effort from us may suffice to change our destiny. It is worse for us to know that the Hour is at hand, and yet to do nothing to achieve our evolutionary goal; for then we are a race doomed to extinction.

The increasing evolutionary pressure to make a decisive choice of our destiny is creating the present general world-tension. It is a sign of the inner crisis in the human consciousness which can only be resolved by a sincere aspiration and an earnest effort to rise above the ordinary ignorant human

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 9.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

consciousness to a higher Truth-Consciousness which will bring about an all-embracing perfection. In the earlier ages those who sought a remedy of life's ills, tried to escape and detach themselves from this world, — they tried to realise liberation in the pure silence of the static Self. For us this immutable silence of the Self cannot be the goal but only the indispensable basis for realising the supreme Truth-Consciousness, the Supermind. The supramental manifestation will eliminate all the repulsive misery of this world. The choice required to be made by us at this critical juncture is: either we rise above into the Supermind or we fall down to be absorbed into the simple, animal species.

There are a number of possibilities which can be envisaged. If man fulfils the evolutionary purpose, he will survive; but if he fails to do so, it is possible that he may be wiped off the earth. Then some other species, more capable of succeeding where he has failed, may replace him. Man may even remain as a static evolutionary link on earth, while some new race progresses towards the goal.

A less awesome possibility is the complete destruction not of the human race but of the civilisation that man has created. Another alternative is that the whole of humanity may not suffer. The few who are ready will manifest the Superman, while the others will achieve perfection in lesser degrees according to the capacity of their consciousness.

Man in essence is a mental being, whose mentality cannot change his life beyond certain narrow limits. But the divine superman will be a gnostic being. The mind is the highest force in man, yet it is an ignorant force. The Truth-conscious Supermind, full of divine glories, will be the creator of the superman. Sri Aurobindo writes of man as "a littleness that reaches to a wideness and grandeur that are beyond him, a dwarf enamoured of the heights."[1] This weak, powerless and struggling human species cannot be the end of the upward evolution of Nature.

The animal possessed the first form of mind, bound to serve the physical life and its needs. Man being a mental being, imagines that the mind plays the most vital role in the universe. But this is an error, for it is much inferior to the infallible superconscient action of the Godhead.

The Mother has asked us, "Will you help?" But what exactly is asked of us and how can we collaborate with her?

To this, the Mother has herself said that the basis, the most indispensable factor is the will to change. It is necessary for us to shed all the obstacles that hamper our progress. If we remember continuously that we are living in a unique period, if we have that certitude and faith, it will help us to get rid of all that impedes us. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "What evolutionary Nature presses for, is an awakening to the knowledge of self, the discovery of

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 8.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

self, the manifestation of the self and spirit within us and the release of its self-knowledge, its self-power, its native self-instrumentation."[1] Therefore the fundamental need is to have a faith in the possibility of this change and the will to prove it in ourselves.

How can an individual help in such a great mass movement? Sri Aurobindo explains that the movement of the mass is a largely sub-conscious movement; it has to express itself through the exceptional individual to become conscious. Moreover, there is no uncertainty that such individuals exist on earth, — both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have definitely stated so. Perhaps, they are still not aware of the great and magnificent role they have to play, but they are present and ready to fight the crucial battle to save humanity from another of those titanic destructions and carry it to its divine fulfilment.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"I know that this is a time of trouble for you and everybody. It is so for the whole world. Confusion, trouble, disorder and upset everywhere is the general state of things. The better things that are to come are preparing or growing under a veil and the worse are prominent everywhere. The one thing is to hold on and hold out till the hour of light has come."

2.6.1946

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, p. 1611.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"I am afraid I can hold out but cold comfort — for the present at least — to those of your correspondents who are lamenting the present state of things. Things are bad, are growing worse and may at any time grow worst or worse than worst if that is possible — and anything, however paradoxical, seems possible in the present perturbed world. The best thing for them is to realise that all this was necessary because certain possibilities had to emerge and be got rid of, if a new and better world was at all to come into being: it would not have done to postpone them for a later time. It is, as in yoga, where things active or latent in the being have to be put into action in the light so that they may be grappled with and thrown out or to emerge from latency in the depths for the same purificatory purpose. Also they can remember the adage that night is darkest before dawn and that the coming of dawn is inevitable. But they must remember too that the new world whose coming we

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1059.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

envisage is not to be made of the same texture as the old and different only in pattern, and that it must come by other means — from within and not from without; so the best way is not to be too much preoccupied with the lamentable things that are happening outside, but themselves to grow within so that they may be ready for the new world, whatever the form it may take."

18.7.1948

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 24, pp. 1611-12.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"What we want to bring to the earth can hardly be called a *revolution*, although it will be the most marvellous change ever seen; in any case this cannot be compared at all with the bloody revolutions which quite uselessly tear up countries without bringing any great change after them, because they leave men as false, as ignorant, as egoistic as before."

(*Some Answers from The Mother*, 1964, p. 4.) THE MOTHER

***

"The one thing to be done is to open your consciousness to what is coming down, to let the change operate in so that the consciousness becomes a consciousness of peace and light and power and joy full of the Divine Presence. When that is there, then what the Divine wants to get done through you or developed in you will be done or developed with a rapidity and perfection which at present is impossible. The one thing needful first, all the rest is only now a field of exercise for the development of the one thing needful."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 703.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"The greatest service to humanity, the surest foundation for its true progress, happiness and perfection is to prepare or find the way by which the individual and the collective man can transcend the ego and live in its true self, no longer bound to ignorance, incapacity, disharmony and sorrow. It is by the pursuit of the eternal and not by living bound in the slow collective evolution of Nature that we can best assure even that evolutionary, collective, altruistic aim our modern thought and idealism have set before us. But it is in itself a secondary aim; to find, know and possess the Divine existence,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

consciousness and nature and to live in it for the Divine is our true aim and the one perfection to which we must aspire."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 344.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"As from the mixing of various elements an unforeseen form emerges, so there may be a greater unknown something concealed and in preparation, not yet formulated in the experimental laboratory of Time, not yet disclosed in the design of Nature. And that then, some greater unexpected birth from the stress of the evolution may be the justifying result of which this unquiet age of gigantic ferment, chaos of ideas and inventions, clash of enormous forces, creation and catastrophe and dissolution is actually amid the formidable agony and tension of this great imperfect body and soul of mankind in creative labour."

(*War and Self-Determination*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 650.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"When superman is born as Nature's king
His presence shall transfigure Matter's world:
He shall light up Truth's fire in Nature's night,
He shall lay upon the earth Truth's greater law;
Man too shall turn towards the Spirit's call.
Awake to his hidden possibility,
Awake to all that slept within his heart
And all that Nature meant when earth was formed
And the Spirit made this ignorant world his home,
He shall aspire to Truth and God and Bliss.
Interpreter of a diviner law
And instrument of a supreme design
The higher kind shall lean to lift up man.
Man shall desire to climb to his own heights.
The truth above shall wake a nether truth;
Even the dumb earth become a sentient force.
The Spirit's tops and Nature's base shall draw
Near to the secret of their separate truth
And know each other as one deity.
The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Then man and superman shall be at one
And all the earth become a single life.
Even the multitude shall hear the Voice
And turn to commune with the Spirit within
And strive to obey the high spiritual law:
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,
Humanity awake to deepest self,
Nature the hidden godhead recognise.
Even the many shall some answer make
And bear the splendour of the Divine's rush
And his impetuous knock at unseen doors.
A heavenlier passion shall upheave men's lives,
Their mind shall share in the ineffable gleam,
Their heart shall feel the ecstasy and the fire,
Earth's bodies shall be conscious of a soul;
Mortality's bond-slaves shall unloose their bonds,
Mere men into spiritual beings grow
And see awake the dumb divinity.
Intuitive beams shall touch the nature's peaks,
A revelation stir the nature's depths:
The Truth shall be the leader of their lives,
Truth shall dictate their thought and speech and act,
They shall feel themselves lifted nearer to the sky,
As if a little lower than the gods.
For knowledge shall pour down its radiant streams
And even darkened mind quiver with new life
And kindle and burn with the Ideal's fire
And turn to escape from mortal ignorance.
The frontiers of the Ignorance shall recede,
More and more souls shall enter into light,
Minds lit, inspired, the occult summoner hear
And lives blaze with a sudden inner flame
And hearts grow enamoured of divine delight
And human wills tune to the divine will,
These separate selves the Spirit's oneness feel,
These senses of heavenly sense grow capable,
The flesh and nerves of a strange ethereal joy
And mortal bodies of immortality.
A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell
And take the charge of breath and speech and act
And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns
And every feeling a celestial thrill.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Often a lustrous inner dawn shall come
Lighting the chambers of the slumbering mind;
A sudden bliss shall run through every limb
And Nature with a mightier Presence fill.
Thus shall the earth open to divinity
And common natures feel the wide uplift,
Illumine common acts with the Spirit's ray
And meet the deity in common things.
Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
The Spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the life divine."

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Savitri*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 29, Book XI, Canto 1, pp. 709-11.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTIETH SEMINAR

26 April 1970

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Is the aim of life to be happy?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Is the aim of life to be happy?

This is just putting things topsy-turvy.

The aim of human life is to discover the Divine and to manifest It. Naturally this discovery leads to happiness; but the happiness is a consequence, not an aim in itself. And it is this mistake of taking a mere consequence for aim of life that has been the cause of most of the miseries which are afflicting human life.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Is the aim of life to be happy?

"This is just putting things topsy-turvy.

The aim of human life is to discover the Divine and to manifest It. Naturally this discovery leads to happiness; but this happiness is a consequence, not an aim in itself. And it is the mistake of taking a mere consequence for aim of life that has been the cause of most of the miseries which are afflicting human life."

28.3.1970 THE MOTHER

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

IS THE AIM OF LIFE TO BE HAPPY?

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"As for the gospel of pleasure, it has been tried before and always failed — Life and Nature after a time weary of it and reject it, as if after a surfeit of cheap sweets. Man has to rush from his pursuit of pleasure, with all its accompaniment of petrifying shallowness, cynicism, hardness, frayed nerves, *ennui*, dissatisfaction and fatigue, to a new idealism or else sink towards a dull or catastrophic decadence. Even if the Absolute Good were a high spiritual or ideal chimera, the pursuit of it is rooted in the very make of humanity and it is one of the main sources of the perennial life of the race. And that it is so would seem to indicate that it is not a chimera — something still beyond man, no doubt, but into which or towards which he is called by Nature to grow."

(*Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 9, pp. 556-57.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-FIRST SEMINAR

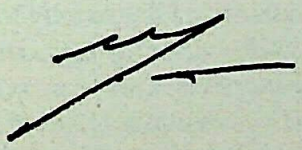
21 November 1970

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"The solution of the world's problems lies in a change of consciousness. What is your conception of this change and how to bring it about?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

The consciousness that has to be manifested is already in the Earth atmosphere. It is now only a question of receptivity



"The consciousness that has to be manifested is already in the earth atmosphere. It is now only a question of receptivity."

19.11.1970

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"THE SOLUTION OF THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS LIES IN A CHANGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS. WHAT IS YOUR CONCEPTION OF THIS CHANGE AND HOW TO BRING IT ABOUT?

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"A contempt for others is out of place, especially since the Divine is in all. Evidently, the activities and aspirations of men are not trivial and worthless, for all life is a growth of the soul out of the darkness towards the Light. But our attitude is that humanity cannot grow out of its limitations by the ordinary means adopted by the human mind, politics, social reform, philanthropy, etc. — these can only be temporary or local palliatives. The only true escape is a change of consciousness, a change into a greater, wider and purer way of being, and a life and action based upon that change. It is therefore to that that the energies must be turned, once the spiritual orientation is complete. This implies no contempt, but the preference of the only effective means over those which have been found ineffective."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, p. 553.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"All this insistence upon action is absurd if one has not the light by which to act. 'Yoga must include life and not exclude it' does not mean that we are bound to accept life as it is with all its stumbling ignorance and misery and the obscure confusion of human will and reason and impulse and instinct which it expresses. The advocates of action think that by human intellect and energy making an always new rush, everything can be put right; the present state of the world after a development of the intellect and a stupendous output of energy for which there is no historical parallel is a signal proof of the emptiness of the illusion under which they labour. Yoga takes the stand that it is only by a change of consciousness that the true basis of life can be discovered; from within outward is indeed the rule. But within does not mean some quarter inch behind the surface. One must go deep and find the soul, the self, the Divine Reality within us and only then can life become a true expression of what we can be instead of a blind and always repeated confused blur of the inadequate and imperfect thing we were. The choice is between remaining in the old jumble and groping about in the hope of stumb-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ling on some discovery or standing back and seeking the Light within till we discover and can build the Godhead within and without us."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, pp. 151-52.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Spirituality cannot be called upon to deal with life by a non-spiritual method or attempt to cure its ills by the panaceas, the political, social or other mechanical remedies which the mind is constantly attempting and which have always failed and will continue to fail to solve anything. The most drastic changes made by these means change nothing; for the old ills exist in a new form: the aspect of the outward environment is altered, but man remains what he was; he is still an ignorant mental being misusing or not effectively using his knowledge, moved by ego and governed by vital desires and passions and the needs of the body, unspiritual and superficial in his outlook, ignorant of his own self and the forces that drive and use him. His life-constructions have a value as expressions of his individual and collective being in the stage to which they have reached or as a machinery for the convenience and welfare of his vital and physical parts and a field and medium for his mental growth, but they cannot take him beyond his present self or serve as a machinery to transform him; his and their perfection can only come by his farther evolution. Only a spiritual change, an evolution of his being from the superficial mental towards the deeper spiritual consciousness, can make a real and effective difference. To discover the spiritual being in himself is the main business of the spiritual man and to help others towards the same evolution is his real service to the race; till that is done, an outward help can succour and alleviate, but nothing or very little more is possible."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 884-85.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"The greatest service to humanity, the surest foundation for its true progress, happiness and perfection is to prepare or find the way by which the individual and the collective man can transcend the ego and live in its true self, no longer bound to ignorance, incapacity, disharmony and sorrow. It is by the pursuit of the eternal and not by living bound in the slow collective evolution of Nature that we can best assure even that evolutionary, collective, altruistic aim our modern thought and idealism have set before us. But it is in itself a secondary aim; to find, know and possess the Divine existence,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

consciousness and nature and to live in it for the Divine is our true aim and the one perfection to which we must aspire."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 344.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"What is demanded by this change is not something altogether distant, alien to our existence and radically impossible; for what has to be developed is there in our being and not something outside it: what evolutionary Nature presses for, is an awakening to the knowledge of self, the discovery of self, the manifestation of the self and spirit within us and the release of its self-knowledge, its self-power, its native self-instrumentation. It is, besides, a step for which the whole of evolution has been a preparation and which is brought closer at each crisis of human destiny when the mental and vital evolution of the being touches a point where intellect and vital force reach some acme of tension and there is a need either for them to collapse, to sink back into a torpor of defeat or a repose of unprogressive quiescence or to rend their way through the veil against which they are straining. What is necessary is that there should be a turn in humanity felt by some or many towards the vision of this change, a feeling of its imperative need, the sense of its possibility, the will to make it possible in themselves and to find the way. That trend is not absent and it must increase with the tension of the crisis in human world-destiny; the need of an escape or a solution, the feeling that there is no other solution than the spiritual cannot but grow and become more imperative under the urgency of critical circumstance. To that call in the being there must always be some answer in the Divine Reality and in Nature."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 1059-60.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"At the basis of this collaboration there must be necessarily the will to change, not to be what one is, and that things must not be as they are. There are several ways to come there and all ways are good when they succeed! One can be thoroughly disgusted with what is and can want ardently to come out of all that and attain something else. One can, and it is a more positive way, one can feel within oneself the contact, the approach of something positively beautiful and true and discard all the rest deliberately so that nothing may weigh heavy on the march towards this new beauty and truth. What is indispensable, in any case, is the ardent will to progress, the willing

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and glad rejection of all that is a shackle to the march, to cast away from oneself what prevents you from advancing and moving towards the unknown with the ardent faith that it is the inescapable truth of tomorrow, that will happen necessarily, a truth that nothing, nobody, no bad will, not even the will of Nature can prevent from becoming the reality — not perhaps in a distant future — a reality that is working itself out at this moment and they who know how to change, who know how not to be burdened with old habits will surely have the happiness not only to perceive but to realise.

"You go to sleep, you forget, you go on living — you forget, you forget all the time. But if you could remember — remember that you are at an exceptional hour, in a unique epoch, that you have this great happiness, this invaluable privilege of being present at the birth of a new world, then you could easily get rid of all that impedes you, prevents you from advancing. Therefore the most important thing seems to be to remember the fact. Even when you have not the tangible experience, to have the certitude, to have the faith, to remember always, to recall it constantly, to go to sleep with this idea, to awake with this feeling; to do whatever you do, having at the background, like a constant support this great truth that you are present at the birth of a new world.

"You may participate in it, you may become this new world. And truly, indeed, when you have such a wonderful opportunity, you must be ready to give up everything for that."

THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, February 1963, pp. 65,67.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-SECOND SEMINAR

28 February 1971

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:*

"How to take a leap towards the future?"

THE MOTHER ANSWERS:

Q: In one of Your previous New Year messages You had asked to make an "imperative choice". Now this year You have asked to take "a leap". What is the difference between that "choice" and this "leap"?

A: "The choice is mental. The leap is made by the whole being."

Q: How is this leap to be taken?

A: "Each one in his own way."

Q: Why have You used the Biblical term "Blessed" in this year's message? Has it any significance?

A: " 'Blessed' is not the exclusive property of the Bible."

24.2.1971

* This subject is related to the mother's New Year message for 1971: "Blessed are those who take a leap towards the future."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO TAKE A LEAP TOWARDS THE FUTURE?

READINGS FROM THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

"On the way of the ascending evolution, everyone is free to choose the direction he will take: the ascent that is swift and steep towards the summits of Truth, the supreme realisation or, turning one's back to the peaks, the facile descent towards termless meanderings of births without end."

(*Bulletin*, November 1959, pp. 53,55.) THE MOTHER

*
**

"For truth of the Spirit has not to be merely thought but to be lived, and to live it demands a unified single-mindedness of the being; so great a change as is contemplated by the Yoga is not to be effected by a divided will or by a small portion of the energy or by a hesitating mind. He who seeks the Divine must consecrate himself to God and to God only."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 63-64.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"The secret of success in Yoga is to regard it not as one of the aims to be pursued in life, but as the whole of life."

(*Ibid.*, p. 65.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"What is standing in the way is something that is still attached to the limitations of the old personality and hesitates to take the plunge because by doing so it may lose these cherished limitations. It stands back in apprehension from the plunge because it is afraid of being taken out of its depths — but unless one is taken out of the very shallow depth of this small part of the self, how can one get into the Infinite at all? Furthermore, there is no real danger in finding oneself in the Infinite, it is a place of greater safety and greater riches, not less; but this something in you does not like the prospect because it has to merge itself into a larger self-existence.... You must get rid

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of this clinging to the past self and life.... You have not fallen between two stools — you are hesitating between two consciousnesses, the old and the new, the small and the great; that is all."

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 9, pp. 508-09.)

***

"It is not possible to enter utterly into the spiritual truth of the Eternal and Infinite if we have not the faith and courage to trust ourselves into the hands of the Lord of all things and the Friend of all creatures and leave utterly behind us our mental limits and measures. At one moment we must plunge without hesitation, reserve or fear or scruple into the ocean of the free, the infinite, the Absolute."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 197.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"Safety lies in tending towards our highest and not in resting content with an inferior potentiality. To follow after the highest in us may seem to be to live dangerously,... but by that danger comes victory and security. To rest in or follow after an inferior potentiality may seem safe, rational, comfortable, easy, but it ends badly, in some futility or in a mere circling, down the abyss or in a stagnant morass. Our right and natural road is towards the summits."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 225.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-THIRD SEMINAR

25 April 1971

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"What is our ideal of integral perfection?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Conscious

union with the

Divine

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS OUR IDEAL OF INTEGRAL PERFECTION?

READINGS FROM THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

"We thirst for perfection. Not this human perfection which is a perfection of the ego and bars the way to the divine perfection.

"But that one perfection which has the power to manifest upon earth the Eternal Truth."

(*New Year Message* for 1962.) THE MOTHER

*
**

"All exaggeration, all exclusiveness is a lack of balance and a fault in respect of harmony, and therefore an error on his part who seeks perfection. For perfection can exist only in a supreme harmony."

(*Bulletin*, April 1971, p. 51.) THE MOTHER

*
**

"The perfection from above is the spiritual perfection, the integral union, the identification with the Divine, the liberation from all limitations of the lower world. It is the perfection in Yoga, a perfection wholly independent of the body and the physical world and which, in ancient times, consisted essentially in rejecting the body and physical life in order to have relations with nothing else than the higher world and finally the Divine alone.

"The perfection from below means to get from the human being in its present form and in its body, in its relation with all things of the earth the maximum of which it is capable....

"The perfection from above is spiritual and ultra-human. The perfection from below is human perfection at its climax, a perfection which, besides, can be absolutely independent of all spiritual life and spiritual aspiration....

"Sri Aurobindo has always said and repeated: 'work from both the ends, do not leave one for the other.'

"Certainly, if you want to have a divine consciousness, you must not give up the spiritual aspiration; but if you want to become an integral divine being upon the earth, take great care not to give up the other end, but make of your body the best possible instrument.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"It is a malady of the ordinary human intelligence which comes necessarily from separation, from division, that things must be either this or that. If you choose this, you turn your back on that; if you choose that, you turn your back on this.

"This is a poor thing. You must know how to take all, combine all, synthesise all. Then you have an integral realisation."

(*Bulletin*, August 1957, pp. 99, 101, 105.) THE MOTHER

⁂

"The perfection of man cannot consist in pursuing the unillumined round of the physical life. Neither can it be found in the wider rounds of the mental being; for that also is instrumental and tends towards something else beyond it, something whose power indeed works in it, but whose larger truth is superconscient to its present intelligence, supramental. The perfection of man lies in the unfolding of the ever-perfect Spirit."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 228.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"Man's road to spiritual supermanhood will be open when he declares boldly that all he has yet developed, including the intellect of which he is so rightly and yet so vainly proud, are now no longer sufficient for him, and that to uncase, discover, set free this greater Light within shall be henceforward his pervading preoccupation. Then will his philosophy, art, science, ethics, social existence, vital pursuits be no longer an exercise of mind and life, done for themselves, carried in a circle, but a means for the discovery of a greater Truth behind mind and life and for the bringing of its power into our human existence. We shall be on the right road to become ourselves, to find our true law of perfection, to live our true, satisfied existence in our real being and divine nature."

(*Ibid.*, p. 230.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

"Man's true freedom and perfection will come when the Spirit within bursts through the forms of mind and life and, winging above to its own gnostic fiery height of ether, turns upon them from that light and flame to seize them and transform into its own image."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 229-30.) SRI AUROBINDO

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"The Yoga that we seek must ... be an integral action of Nature, and the whole difference between the Yogin and the natural man will be this, that the Yogin seeks to substitute in himself for the integral action of the lower Nature working in and by ego and division the integral action of the higher Nature working in and by God and unity."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, p. 40.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"To grow into the truth and power of the Spirit and by the direct action of that power to be made a fit channel of its self-expression, — a living of man in the Divine and a divine living of the Spirit in humanity, — will ... be the principle and the whole object of an integral Yoga of self-perfection."

(*Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 592.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"A Yoga of integral perfection regards man as a divine spiritual being involved in mind, life and body; it aims therefore at a liberation and a perfection of his divine nature. It seeks to make an inner living in the perfectly developed spiritual being his constant intrinsic living and the spiritualised action of mind, life and body only its outward human expression.... It rejects nothing that is essential in the mundane aim, but enlarges it, finds and lives in its greater and its truer meaning now hidden from it, transfigures it from a limited, earthly and mortal thing to a figure of infinite, divine and immortal values."

(*Ibid.*, p. 594.) SRI AUROBINDO

***

"There can be no real perfection for us except by our inner self and truth of spiritual existence taking up all truth of the instrumental existence into itself and giving to it oneness, integration, harmony. As our only real freedom is the discovery and disengagement of the spiritual Reality within us, so our only means of true perfection is the sovereignty and self-effectuation of the spiritual Reality in all the elements of our nature."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 1051.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-FOURTH SEMINAR

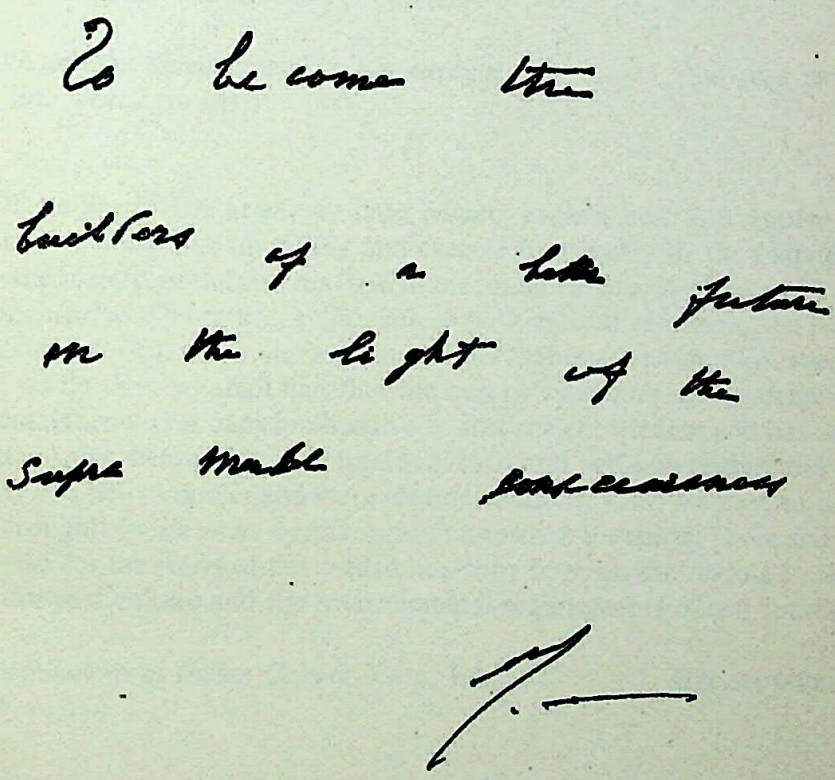
28 November 1971

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Sri Aurobindo's call to the youth."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: What is Sri Aurobindo's call to the youth?"



A: "To become the builders of a better future in the light of the Supramental consciousness."

27.11.1971

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SRI AUROBINDO'S CALL TO THE YOUTH

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

THE YOUTH AND THE FUTURE

"The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development and it is the young who must create it. But it is also a world of truth, courage, justice, lofty aspiration and straightforward fulfilment which we seek to create. For the coward, for the self-seeker, for the talker who goes forward at the beginning and afterwards leaves his fellows in the lurch there is no place in the future of this movement. A brave, frank, clear-hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built."

("*Youth and the Bureaucracy*" in *Karmayogin*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 2, p. 141.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"If we are to live at all, we must resume India's great interrupted endeavour; we must take up boldly and execute thoroughly in the individual and in the society, in the spiritual and in the mundane life, in philosophy and religion, in art and literature, in thought, in political and economic and social formulation the full and unlimited sense of her highest spirit and knowledge. And if we do that, we shall find that the best of what comes to us draped in Occidental forms, is already implied in our own ancient wisdom and has there a greater spirit behind it, a profounder truth and self-knowledge and the capacity of a will to nobler and more ideal formations. Only we need to work out thoroughly in life what we have always known in the spirit. There and nowhere else lies the secret of the needed harmony between the essential meaning of our past culture and the environmental requirements of our future."

(*The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 14, p. 37.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Our ideal is a new birth of humanity into the spirit; our life must be a spiritually inspired effort to create a body of action for the great new birth and creation.

"A spiritual ideal has always been the characteristic idea and aspiration

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of India. But the progress of Time and the need of humanity demand a new orientation and another form of that ideal. The old forms and methods are no longer sufficient for the purpose of the Time-Spirit.... Our ideal is not the spirituality that withdraws from life but the conquest of life by the power of the spirit. It is to accept the world as an effort of manifestation of the Divine, but also to transform humanity by a greater effort of manifestation than has yet been accomplished, one in which the veil between man and God shall be removed, the divine manhood of which we are capable shall come to birth and our life shall be remoulded in the truth and light and power of the spirit....

"The West has made the growth of the intellectual, emotional, vital and material being of man its ideal, but it has left aside the greater possibilities of his spiritual existence.... The West has put its faith in its science and machinery and it is being destroyed by its science and crushed under its mechanical burden. It has not understood that a spiritual change is necessary for the accomplishment of its ideals. The East has the secret of that spiritual change, but it has too long turned its eyes away from the earth. The time has now come to heal the division and to unite life and the spirit.

"This secret too has been possessed but not sufficiently practised by India. It is summarised in the rule of the Gita, *yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi*. Its principle is to do all actions in Yoga, in union with God, on the foundation of the highest self and through the rule of all our members by the power of the spirit. And this we believe to be not only possible for man but the true solution of all his problems and difficulties. This then is the message we shall constantly utter and this the ideal that we shall put before the young and rising India, a spiritual life that shall take up all human activities and avail to transfigure the world for the great age that is coming. India, she that has carried in herself from of old the secret, can alone lead the way in this great transformation of which the present *sandhyā* of the old *yuga* is the forerunner. This must be her mission and service to humanity, — as she discovered the inner spiritual life of the individual, so now to discover for the race its integral collective expression and found for mankind its new spiritual and communal order....

"Our call is to young India. It is the young who must be builders of the new world... all who are free in mind and heart to accept a completer truth and labour for a greater ideal. They must be men who will dedicate themselves not to the past or the present but to the future. They will need to consecrate their lives to an exceeding of their lower self, to the realisation of God in themselves and in all human beings and to a whole-minded and indefatigable labour for the nation and for humanity. This ideal can be as yet only a little seed and the life that embodies it a small nucleus, but it is our fixed hope that the seed will grow into a tree and the nucleus be the heart of an ever-extending formation. It is with a confident trust in the spirit that in-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

spires us that we take our place among the standard-bearers of the new humanity that is struggling to be born amidst the chaos of a world in dissolution, and of the future India, the greater India of the rebirth that is to rejuvenate the mighty outworn body of the ancient Mother."

("Ourselves" in *The Standard Bearer*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 16, pp. 329-31.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Find the Guide secret within you or housed in an earthly body, hearken to his voice and follow always the way that he points. At the end is the Light that fails not, the Truth that deceives not, the Power that neither strays nor stumbles, the wide freedom, the ineffable Beatitude."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, pp. 147-48.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

TO THE CHILDREN OF THE ASHRAM

"There is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts. Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

"Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all his time to establish in himself this consciousness which he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realise it.

"You have the immense privilege of having come quite young to the Ashram, that is to say, still plastic and capable of being moulded according to this new ideal and thus become the representatives of the new race. Here,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

in the Ashram, you are in the most favourable conditions with regard to the environment, the influence, the teaching and the example, to awaken in you this supramental consciousness and to grow according to its law.

"Now, all depends on your will and your sincerity. If you have the will no more to belong to ordinary humanity, no more to be merely evolved animals: if your will is to become men of the new race realising Sri Aurobindo's suprmental ideal, living a new and higher life upon a new earth, you will find here all the necessary help to achieve your purpose: you will profit fully by your stay in the Ashram and eventually become living examples for the world."

24 July, 1951 THE MOTHER

(*Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education*, 1966, p. 105.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-FIFTH SEMINAR

27 February 1972

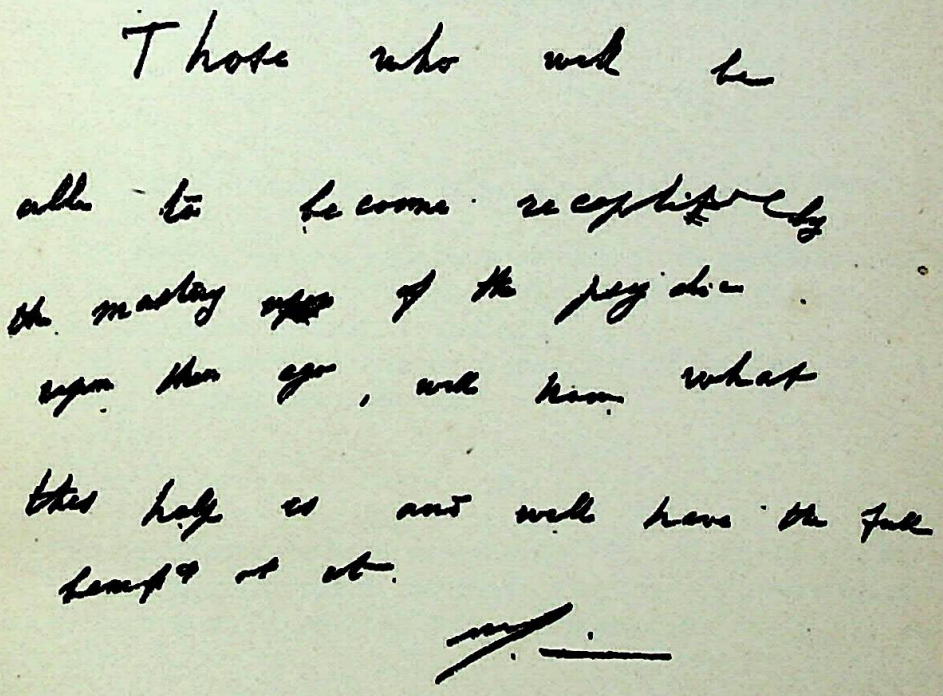
SUBJECT APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:

"How to be worthy of Sri Aurobindo's Centenary?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: On the 1st January this year You said: "A special help has come on to the earth for Sri Aurobindo's centenary year."

Will You please indicate the nature and action of this help and also what we should do to avail ourselves of it?



"Those who will be able to become receptive by the mastery of the psychic upon their ego, will know what this help is and will have the full benefit of it."

24.2.1972

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO BE WORTHY OF SRI AUROBINDO'S CENTENARY?

READINGS FROM THE MOTHER AND SRI AUROBINDO

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGES ON SRI AUROBINDO'S BIRTH CENTENARY

MESSAGE TO ALL INDIA RADIO

"Today is the first day of Sri Aurobindo's centenary year. Though he has left his body he is still with us, alive and active.

"Sri Aurobindo belongs to the future; he is the messenger of the future. He still shows us the way to follow in order to hasten the realisation of a glorious future fashioned by the Divine Will.

"All those who want to collaborate for the progress of humanity and for India's luminous destiny must unite in a clairvoyant aspiration and in an illumined work."

15-8-1971

⁂

"Sri Aurobindo came to tell the world of the beauty of the future that must be realised.

"He came to give not a hope but a certitude of the splendour towards which the world moves. The world is not an unfortunate accident, it is a marvel which moves towards its expression.

"The world needs the certitude of the beauty of the future. And Sri Aurobindo has given that assurance."

27.11.1971

⁂

"Sri Aurobindo came to tell us how to find Thee and how to serve Thee.

"Grant that in this year of his centenary we may truly understand what he has taught us and in all sincerity put it into practice."

6.12.1971

⁂

"Sri Aurobindo gave his life so that we may be born into the Divine Consciousness."

24.12.1971

⁂

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

1972

Bonne Année

"This year is consecrated to Sri Aurobindo.

"To understand his teaching better and try to put it into practice, is certainly the best way of showing our gratitude to him for all the light, knowledge and force which he has so generously brought to the earth.

"May his teaching enlighten and guide us, and what we cannot do today, we shall do tomorrow.

"Let us take the right attitude in all sincerity, and it will truly be a Bonne Année."

31.12.1971

***

"Without the Divine we are limited, incompetent and helpless beings; with the Divine, if we give ourselves entirely to Him, all is possible and our progress is limitless.

"A special help has come on to the earth for Sri Aurobindo's centenary year; let us take advantage of it to overcome the ego and emerge into the light."

Bonne Année

1.1.1972

***

"When Sri Aurobindo left his body he said that he would not abandon us. And, in truth, during these twenty one years, he has always been with us, guiding and helping all those who are receptive and open to his influence.

"In this year of his centenary, his help will be stronger still. It is up to us to be more open and to know how to take advantage of it. The future is for those who have the soul of a hero. The stronger and more sincere our faith, the more powerful and effective will be the help received."

2.1.1972

***

Sri Aurobindo's Teaching and Method of Sadhana

"The teaching of Sri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. It is possible by a certain psychological discipline to remove this veil of separative consciousness and become aware of the true Self, the Divinity within us and all.

"Sri Aurobindo's teaching states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second; but the evolution does not finish with mind, it awaits a release into something greater, a consciousness which is spiritual and supramental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Supermind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it becomes possible for life to manifest perfection.

"But while the former steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument. It is not, however, by the mental will in man that this can be wholly done, for the mind goes only to a certain point and after that can only move in a circle. A conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind has to change into the higher principle. This method is to be found through the ancient psychological discipline and practice of Yoga. In the past, it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Sri Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance or its very limited knowledge by a supramental Truth-Consciousness which will be a sufficient instrument of the inner Self and make it possible for the human being to find himself dynamically as well as inwardly and grow out of his still animal humanity into a diviner race. The psychological discipline of Yoga can be used to that end by opening all the parts of the being to a conversion or transformation through the descent and working of the higher still concealed supramental principle.

"This, however, cannot be done at once or in a short time or by any rapid or miraculous transformation. Many steps have to be taken by the seeker before the supramental descent is possible. Man lives mostly in his surface mind, life and body, but there is an inner being within him with greater possibilities to which he has to awake — for it is only a very restricted influence

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

from it that he receives now and that pushes him to a constant pursuit of a greater beauty, harmony, power and knowledge. The first process of Yoga is therefore to open the ranges of this inner being and to live from there outward, governing his outward life by an inner light and force. In doing so he discovers in himself his true soul which is not this outer mixture of mental, vital and physical elements but something of the Reality behind them, a spark from the one Divine Fire. He has to learn to live in his soul and purify and orientate by its drive towards the Truth the rest of the nature. There can follow afterwards an opening upward and descent of a higher principle of the Being. But even then it is not at once the full supramental Light and Force. For there are several ranges of consciousness between the ordinary human mind and the supramental Truth-Consciousness. These intervening ranges have to be opened up and their power brought down into the mind, life and body. Only afterwards can the full power of the Truth-Consciousness work in the nature. The process of this self-discipline or Sadhana is therefore long and difficult, but even a little of it is so much gained because it makes the ultimate release and perfection more possible.

"There are many things belonging to older systems that are necessary on the way — an opening of the mind to a greater wideness and to the sense of the Self and the Infinite, an emergence into what has been called the cosmic consciousness, mastery over the desires and passions; an outward asceticism is not essential, but the conquest of desire and attachment and a control over the body and its needs, greeds and instincts are indispensable. There is a combination of the principles of the old systems, the way of knowledge through the mind's discernment between Reality and the appearance, the heart's way of devotion, love and surrender and the way of works turning the will away from motives of self-interest to the Truth and the service of a greater Reality than the ego. For the whole being has to be trained so that it can respond and be transformed when it is possible for that greater Light and Force to work in the nature.

"In this discipline, the inspiration of the Master, and in the difficult stages his control and his presence are indispensable — for it would be impossible otherwise to go through it without much stumbling and error which would prevent all chance of success. The Master is one who has risen to a higher consciousness and being and he is often regarded as its manifestation or representative. He not only helps by his teaching and still more by his influence and example but by a power to communicate his own experience to others.

"This is Sri Aurobindo's teaching and method of practice. It is not his object to develop any one religion or to amalgamate the older religions or to found any new religion — for any of these things would lead away from his central purpose. The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

which each one who follows it can in time discover the One Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness than the mental, a spiritual and supramental consciousness which will transform and divinise human nature."

(*On Himself*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 26, pp. 95-97.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"The boon that we have asked from the Supreme is the greatest that the Earth can ask from the Highest, the change that is most difficult to realise, the most exacting in its conditions. It is nothing less than the descent of the supreme Truth and Power into Matter, the supramental established in the material plane and consciousness and the material world and an integral transformation down to the very principle of Matter. Only a supreme Grace can effect this miracle.

"The supreme Power has descended into the most material consciousness but it has stood there behind the density of the physical veil, demanding before manifestation, before its great open workings can begin, that the conditions of the supreme Grace shall be there, real and effective.

"A total surrender, an exclusive self-opening to the divine influence, a constant and integral choice of the Truth and rejection of the falsehood, these are the only conditions made. But these must be fulfilled entirely, without reserve, without any evasion or pretence, simply and sincerely down to the most physical consciousness and its workings."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 46.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Get the psychic being in front and keep it there, putting its power on the mind, vital and physical, so that it shall communicate to them its force of single-minded aspiration, trust, faith, surrender, direct and immediate detection of whatever is wrong in the nature and turned towards ego and error, away from Light and Truth.

"Eliminate egoism in all its forms; eliminate it from every movement of your consciousness.

"Develop the cosmic consciousness — let the ego-centric outlook disappear in wideness, impersonality, the sense of the Cosmic Divine, the perception of universal forces, the realisation and understanding of the cosmic manifestation, the play.

"Find in place of ego the true being — a portion of the Divine, issued from the World-Mother and an instrument of the manifestation. This sense

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of being a portion of the Divine and an instrument should be free from all pride, sense or claim of ego or assertion of superiority, demand or desire. For if these elements are there, then it is not the true thing.

"Most in doing yoga live in the mind, vital, physical, lit up occasionally or to some extent by the higher mind and by the illumined mind; but to prepare for the supramental change it is necessary (as soon as, personally, the time has come) to open up to the Intuition and the overmind, so that these may make the whole being and the whole nature ready for the supramental change. Allow the consciousness quietly to develop and widen and the knowledge of these things will progressively come.

"Calm, discrimination, detachment (but not indifference) are all very important, for their opposites impede very much the transforming action. Intensity of aspiration should be there, but it must go along with these. No hurry, no inertia, neither rajasic over-eagerness nor tamasic discouragement — a steady and persistent but quiet call and working. No snatching or clutching at realisation, but allowing realisation to come from within and above and observing accurately its field, its nature, its limits.

"Let the power of the Mother work in you, but be careful to avoid any mixture or substitution, in its place, of either a magnified ego-working or a force of Ignorance presenting itself as Truth. Aspire especially for the elimination of all obscurity and unconsciousness in the nature.

"These are the main conditions of preparation for the supramental change; but none of them is easy, and they must be complete before the nature can be said to be ready. If the true attitude (psychic, unegoistic, open only to the Divine Force) can be established, then the process can go on much more quickly. To take and keep the true attitude, to further the change in oneself, is the help that can be given, the one thing asked to assist the general change."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 23, pp. 554-55.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

"Whosoever is weary of the littlenesses that are, whosoever is enamoured of the divine greatnesses that shall be, whosoever has any glimpse of the Supreme within him or above him or around him let him hear the call, let him follow the path. The way is difficult, the labour heavy and arduous and long, but its reward is habitation in an unimaginable glory, a fathomless felicity, a happy and endless vastness.

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 147.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-SIXTH SEMINAR

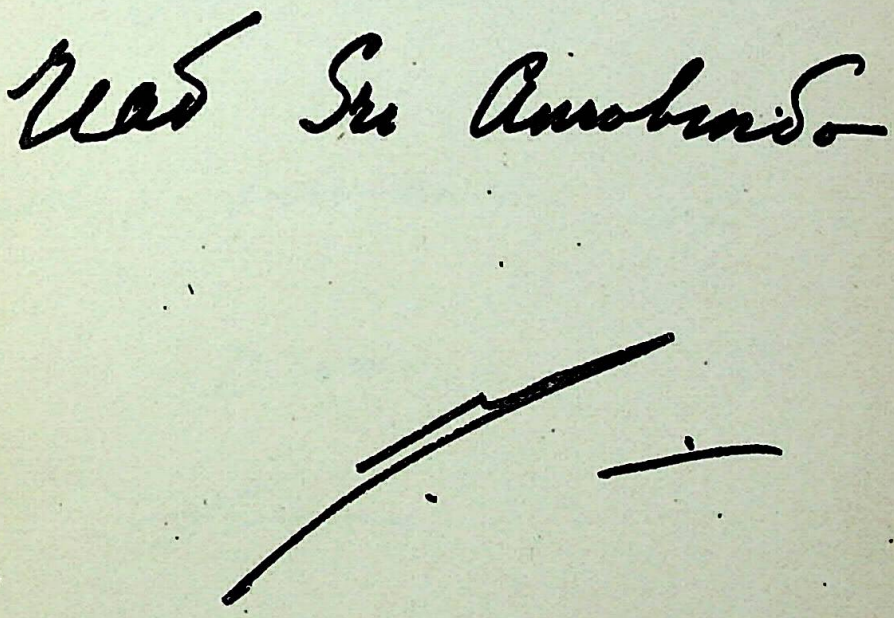
23 April 1972

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Education and Yoga."

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: What should be the spirit and character of education when it is undertaken as a part of the discipline of Yoga?



19. 4. 1972

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

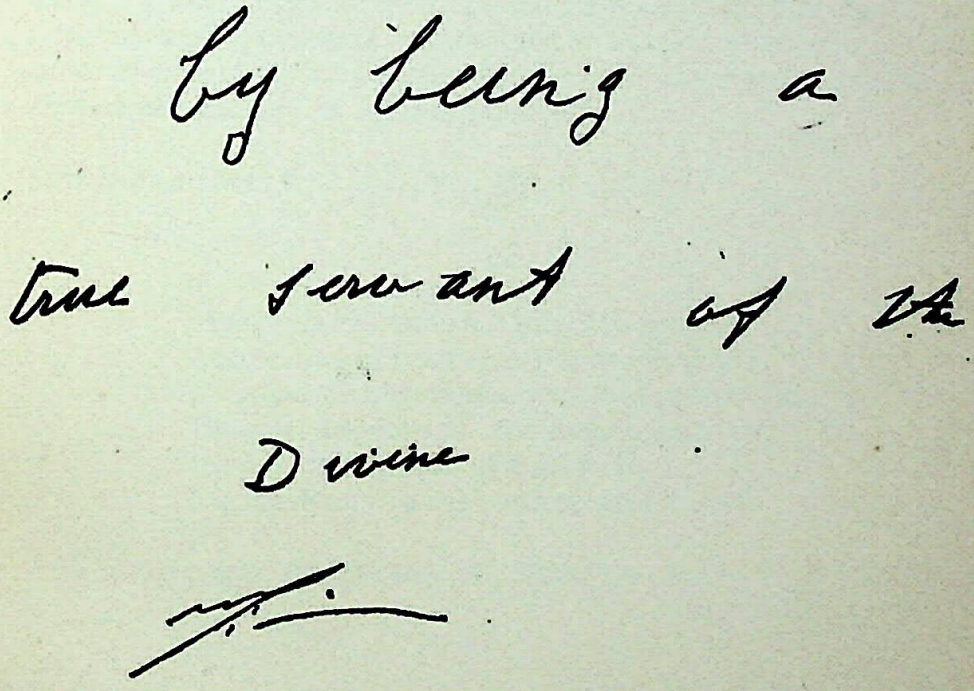
TWENTY-SEVENTH SEMINAR

25 February 1973

SUBJECT CHOSEN BY THE MOTHER:

"How to collaborate in all sincerity in showing to the world that man can be a true servant of the Divine?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:



"By being a true servant of the Divine."

24.2.1973

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

HOW TO COLLABORATE IN ALL SINCERITY IN SHOWING TO THE WORLD THAT MAN CAN BE A TRUE SERVANT OF THE DIVINE?

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"If the light that is being born increases, if the number of individuals who seek to realise the possibility in themselves and in the world grows large and they get nearer the right way, then the Spirit who is here in man, now a concealed divinity, a developing light and power, will descend more fully as the Avatar of a yet unseen and unguessed Godhead from above into the soul of mankind and into the great individualities in whom the light and power are the strongest. There will then be fulfilled the change that will prepare the transition of human life from its present limits into those larger and purer horizons; the earthly evolution will have taken its great impetus upward and accomplished the revealing step in a divine progression of which the birth of thinking and aspiring man from the animal nature was only an obscure preparation and a far-off promise."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, pp. 253-54.)

*
**

"Some shall be made the glory's receptacles
And vehicles of the Eternal's luminous power.
These are the high forerunners, the heads of Time,
The great deliverers of earth-bound mind,
The high transfigurers of human clay,
The first-born of a new supernal race."

(*Savitri*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 29, Book XI, Canto 1, p. 705.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

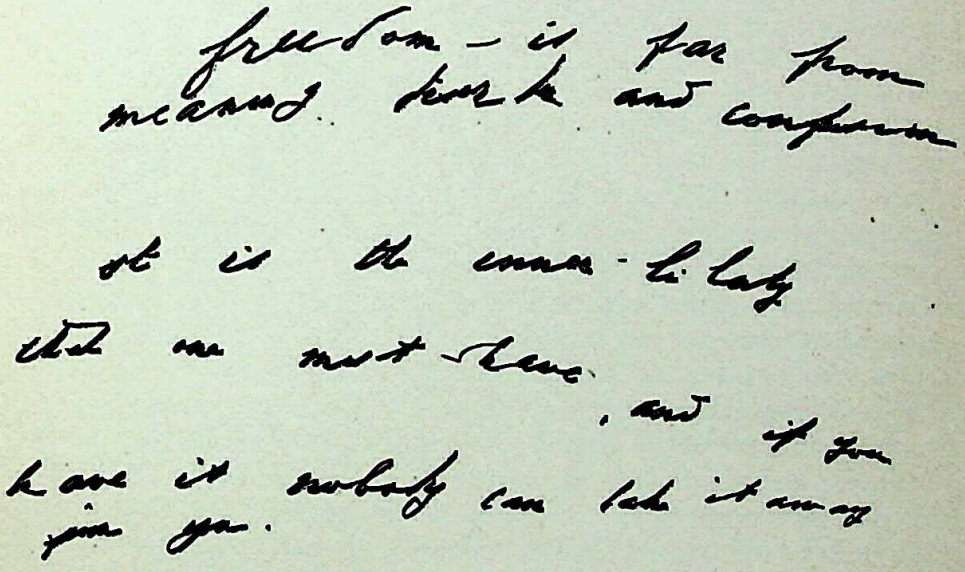
TWENTY-EIGHTH SEMINAR

22 April 1973

SUBJECT APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:

"How to reconcile the individual's claim for freedom with the collectivity's need for unity and order?"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:



"Freedom is far from meaning disorder and confusion.

"It is the inner liberty that we must have, and if you have it nobody can take it away from you."

28.3.1973

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"HOW TO RECONCILE THE INDIVIDUAL'S CLAIM FOR FREEDOM WITH THE COLLECTIVITY'S NEED FOR UNITY AND ORDER?"

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being, to grow to our natural self-fulfilment, to find out naturally and freely our harmony with our environment. The dangers and disadvantages of liberty, the disorder, strife, waste and confusion to which its wrong use leads are indeed obvious. But they arise from the absence or defect of the sense of unity between individual and individual, between community and community, which pushes them to assert themselves at the expense of each other instead of growing by mutual help and interchange and to assert freedom for themselves in the very act of encroaching on the free development of their fellows. If a real, a spiritual and psychological unity were effectuated, liberty would have no perils and disadvantages; for free individuals enamoured of unity would be compelled by themselves, by their own need, to accommodate perfectly their own growth with the growth of their fellows and would not feel themselves complete except in the free growth of others. Because of our present imperfection and the ignorance of our mind and will, law and regimentation have to be called in to restrain and to compel from outside. The facile advantages of a strong law and compulsion are obvious, but equally great are the disadvantages. Such perfection as it succeeds in creating tends to be mechanical and even the order it imposes turns out to be artificial and liable to break down if the yoke is loosened or the restraining grasp withdrawn. Carried too far, an imposed order discourages the principle of natural growth which is the true method of life and may even slay the capacity for real growth. We repress and overstandardise life at our peril; by over-regimentation we crush Nature's initiative and habit of intuitive self-adaptation. Dwarfed or robbed of elasticity, the devitalised individuality, even while it seems outwardly fair and symmetrical, perishes from within. Better anarchy than the long continuance of a law which is not our own or which our real nature cannot assimilate. And all repressive or preventive law is only a makeshift, a substitute for the true law which must develop from within and be not a check on liberty, but its outward image and visible expression. Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty."

(*The Ideal of Human Unity*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, pp. 403-4.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

TWENTY-NINTH SEMINAR

24 February 1974

SUBJECT:

"Science, Reason and Yoga."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SCIENCE, REASON AND YOGA

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

By way of introduction to the subject of the present Seminar, I may say that the issue between Science on the one side and Yoga on the other is of immense significance for the modern age because it presents us with two alternatives which confront us as two contradictory pursuits between which we are compelled to make a choice and the choice we make will have a crucial bearing on our destiny as a race.

In saying this, I refer to Science and Yoga as they are commonly understood in the modern world and not in their intrinsic sense, because in their intrinsic sense they are not contradictory pursuits with opposing aims but complementary endeavours jointly moving towards an identical goal.

But in their modern form Science and Yoga drive us in opposite directions. For in modern times Science has become principally physical science and preoccupied itself with the investigation of the material world and its phenomena. It has also firmly entrenched itself in a materialistic world-view from which it refuses to budge even though the latest researches in its own field and by its own methods have broken the foundation on which that view rested till recently. This modern materialistic science asserts that the world and ourselves are a creation of a brute, blind, mechanical, inconscient, material force which is the basic reality of the universe. This gospel of scientific materialism has condemned Spirit and all spiritual values and endeavour as an ignorant superstition and a vain delusion.

On the other side, Yoga, as it is still commonly understood owing to the preponderant influence of the traditional ascetic spirituality, has preached the sole reality of the pure incommunicable silent Spirit and has condemned the world and earthly life as a futile illusion.

There is no meeting-ground between these two endeavours; Matter and Spirit, World and God have been made antithetical, each cancelling the other.

But, as I said, this is the result of the commonly accepted sense of Science and Yoga and not of their true intrinsic sense. For in their true intrinsic sense neither is Science compelled to confine itself exclusively to the study of the physical world and bound to the doctrine of materialism rejecting the Spirit as a blind superstition, nor is Yoga compelled to turn exclusively to the pure silent aloof Spirit and bound to the doctrine of illusionism preaching the vanity of worldly existence. Following Sri Aurobindo, we may say that it is only by some transitional evolutionary necessity that these two endeavours of immense significance to human evolution have turned into conflicting pur-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

suits and driven humanity into blind or fruitless alleys. But this is not indispensable because in their essential sense and true significance Science and Yoga are comrade powers and not perpetually warring enemies.

They have turned into warring enemies because modern Science has taken a partial and therefore a wrong view of Matter, and traditional ascetic Yoga has taken an equally partial and therefore a wrong view of Spirit. If they discard their partial vision and see the complete truth of Matter and of Spirit they will change into companion powers and lead humanity by their joint endeavour to its supreme perfection, its divine destiny.

It is Sri Aurobindo who gives us this true and complete vision both of Spirit and of Matter and thereby bridges the gulf and reconciles the quarrel between Science and Yoga.

I do not intend to elaborate this point in these introductory remarks; the speakers who follow me will do that in their own manner. I shall conclude by reading only one sentence of Sri Aurobindo in which he states this reconciliation in words of immaculate perfection:

"The two are one: Spirit is the soul and reality of that which we sense as Matter; Matter is a form and body of that which we realise as Spirit."[1]

SPEECH BY MAURICE SHUKLA

We find ourselves today on the threshold of a New Age, tantalizingly near to a new order of existence, of which the key is held by our groping fingers. A stage has been reached where the human mind has been suddenly arrested in the midst of its dazzling display of scientific achievements and its extraordinary extension of the knowledge of the material universe around us. But this triumphant and all-dominating materialistic Science of the present century and its staunch ally Reason find themselves dangerously on the brink of getting toppled by some Force beyond Matter, a mysterious Force which they can neither apprehend nor combat — the Force of spirituality, which in common parlance is known as Yoga.

The tendency towards spiritual seeking and a quest for a consciousness beyond mind came into prominence as a result of a disappointed recoil from the 19th century Rationalism and Materialism, a marked dissatisfaction with the pretended omniscience and omnipotence of Reason and Mind and a consequent "feeling out for something deeper". Previously all phenomenon was looked at in a very dogmatic scientific perspective. The scientist's criterion of Reality demanded a physical actuality and objectivity and a capacity of its

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 241.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

becoming an object of our outer consciousness. The phenomenon had to be acceptable to that part of Reason or Mind which builds and depends on the external data acquired by the physical senses and considered by it as the one solid reliable source of knowledge. Any phenomenon that did not fit into these narrow preconceived bounds was branded rather suspiciously as "metaphysics, mysticism and moonshine".

However, the truly scientific mind whose very essence is a seeking for true knowledge, even if it be through zigzags of error and a confused semi-lit power of perception, could not ignore the intimations from the mysterious Unknown Realm beyond, and troubled by the pressing need for ascertainment the scientist has been helplessly hurled into discovering a new dimension of Reality. Awakened from a state of numb indifference to the awareness of an acute dissatisfaction with its own methods and results, Science has been driven to hunt for something more satisfying, more permanent, more luminous.

The latest discoveries in Psychology and the new developments of Science have brought about a tremendous change in modern thought. Psychology has come to recognise the existence of a consciousness beyond the mind and the intellect, more refined and powerful in its influence and subtly determining our actions, and Science is reluctantly admitting that it has, as yet, explained only processes and has been unable to tackle the fundamental Reality. Sri Aurobindo, however, points out the flaws of Science even in its attempt to explain the process. He says: "Science, like most mental and external knowledge, gives you only truth of process. I would add that it cannot give you even the whole truth of process; for you seize some of the ponderables, but miss the all-important imponderables; you get, hardly even the how, but the conditions under which things happen in Nature."[1]

Further, he remarks on Science that "The scheme it has built up of the evolution not only of this rich and vast and variegated material world, but of life and consciousness and mind and their workings out of a brute mass of electrons, identical and varied only in arrangement and number, is an irrational magic more baffling than any the most mystic imagination could conceive."[2]

The emergence of spiritual truths and ideas and supernormal yogic experiences has frankly surprised and confounded Science and Reason, as the ground on which they stood so firmly seems to be giving way. The scientists and rationalists are disconcerted by the fact that their own theories, based on a complete exclusion of all notions of subjective spiritual Reality, are gradually disintegrating into ludicrous fallacies.

It is only a matter of time before there is a complete "reversal of our view

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), pp. 196-97.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

both of the subjective mind realities and objective physical realities so that they are seen as things phenomenal, secondary, dependent upon the truth of self and the realities of the spirit".[1]

In spite of this, the rational mind clings on to its old moorings. It is too arrogant and self-confident to accept the Higher Knowledge which delves deep into the very source of existence and arrives at a profound revelation of the fundamental spiritual Reality by a total identity with it. It insists on interpreting the Higher Knowledge in its own mental way and by its own mental standards. It still wallows in the comfortable delusion that it has a passport and a right of entry into every sphere of universal existence.

Now the question we may ask ourselves is whether this claim of Reason is valid.

To answer that basic question, a review of the nature of the higher spiritual knowledge attained through Yoga, and the capacity of Reason and Science in relation to that knowledge, is essential.

The spiritual view of existence regards body, life and mind not as ends in themselves but "as first instruments of the soul, the yet imperfect instruments of an unseized diviner purpose".[2] The mind is an instrument of man's inner spiritual being, of which in fact everything is an expression. This deeper view sees the Infinite pervading all finite things in the universe. These things are to be judged in relation to that deeper truth of the Infinite, of which they are the "imperfect translation" and towards which, by a more luminous expression of that truth, they are all labouring to arrive. The spiritual man sees a greater and more comprehensive Reality than the phenomenal and the physical, "not only behind man and the world but within man and the world".

Now let us consider the nature of the mind's working on which Reason and Science depend for their knowledge. The value and content of all knowledge — subjective or objective — rests on the manner of knowing and on the nature of the particular instrument used for attaining that knowledge. Reason and Science start from a certain amalgamation of sense-perceptions which are received, then classified in a coherent system. From this systematic classification emerge certain deductions or conclusions which are formulated as laws on which are based the possibilities of prediction. An unprejudiced view of these constituent elements of the mental way of knowledge would reveal their inherent limitations. Observation, for instance, can never be wholly objective. Reason sees the world through the "prism" of the observing faculty which is never free of bias and predilections. The inferences from sense-experience that Reason draws vary with the observer. Since the way of seeing and observing a thing can never be identical in two persons, Science has been compelled to recognize "the necessity of personal equation and has

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 473.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 213.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

created an imaginary observer, a 'mean man' as the standard of reference[1]".

Another limitation of mental observation is the limited scope or field and the limited amount of data on which it has to base itself, its tendency to look at things in "segmented divisions" and select "one segment of the whole as if it were the whole Reality". The classification and the consequent deduction, derived from such a narrow range of facts and valid only in their immediate relation and in a restricted bound of space and time, thus alienate themselves further from Truth and certainty.

The very foundation of Science is shaky and insecure as it excludes the fundamental truth of the Divine Reality. Says Sri Aurobindo: "There is no fundamental significance in things if you miss the Divine Reality; for you remain embedded in a huge surface crust of manageable and utilisable appearance. It is the magic of the Magician you are trying to analyse, but only when you enter into the consciousness of the Magician himself can you begin to experience the true origination, significance and circles of the Lila."[2]

So vast and infinite is the knowledge of that Divine Reality that to it "all Science put together is a bagatelle".[3]

Sri Aurobindo expresses a similar idea very vividly in an aphorism: "To see the composition of the sun or the lines of Mars is doubtless a great achievement; but when thou hast the instrument that can show thee a man's soul as thou seest a picture, then thou wilt smile at the wonders of physical Science as the playthings of babies."[4]

The whole issue between Science and Reason on the one hand and spiritual knowledge on the other rests upon what Sri Aurobindo calls one simple question: "Is mental consciousness with its groping enquiry, endless argument, unquenchable doubt, stiff and unplastic logic something superior or even equal to the Divine Consciousness or is it something inferior in its action and status?"[5] If it is superior or equal then all seeking in spirituality for the Divine is meaningless and superfluous, but "if it is inferior, how can it challenge, judge, make the Divine stand as an accused or a witness before its tribunal, summon it to appear as a candidate for admission before a Board of Examiners or pin it like an insect under its examining microscope?"[6]

With the limited finite consciousness of our rational mind it is not possible to arrive at a true realisation of the Infinite Reality.

But it is necessary to note that along with these drawbacks, Science and Reason have also a brighter and more positive side to them and in any integral view of life this will have to be taken into account.

[1] Nolini Kanta Gupta, "Rationalism" in *Collected Works*, Vol. I, p. 10.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 197.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 91.
[5] [6] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 170.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

One of the most important conclusions reached by Science is that the world as we see it is an illusion; things are not what they apparently seem to be. It is the construction of our sense-organs that puts us in relation with the world in a way which is totally superficial, illusory and unreal. This conclusion of Science is entirely valid and conforms to the view of Yoga about our normal perception of the external world.

Further, the indispensable and priceless service rendered by rationalistic and scientific Materialism to humanity cannot be ignored. Reason has helped man to rise above a purely vitalistic barbarian existence by its higher control and government of the vital and physical parts of his nature. It has uplifted, refined and subjected them to a disciplined obedience to the enlightened intellect and will, and it has succeeded to some extent in making life the instrument of the aesthetic, ethical and rational ideals — in a word, Reason has lifted man from sheer barbarism and infused into him a more illumined consciousness.

Another great service rendered by Reason and Science to the forward progress of humanity has to be noted. The mysterious occult and spiritual worlds and powers which are beckoning us, can be safely integrated into our life only if the "intellect has been severely trained to a clear austerity". For, seized on by unripe minds they lend themselves "to the most perilous distortions and misleading imaginations and actually in the past encrusted a real nucleus of truth with such an accretion of perverting superstitions and irrationalising dogmas that all advance in true knowledge was rendered impossible".[1]

To evade any possibility of this happening, a clear, disciplined, discriminating intellect is indispensable as a basis for that greater knowledge. The rationalistic tendency of Materialism has rendered this great service to humanity by insisting upon such a disciplined intellect in its search for truth.

"It is necessary," affirms Sri Aurobindo, "that advancing Knowledge should base herself on a clear, pure and disciplined intellect. It is necessary, too, that she should correct her errors sometimes by a return to the restraint of sensible fact, the concrete realities of the physical world. The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the a son of Earth, even when he seeks a supraphysical Knowledge....'Earth is His footing,' says the Upanishad whenever it images the Self that manifests in the universe. And it is certainly the fact that the wider we extend and the surer we make our knowledge of the physical world, the wider and surer becomes our foundation for the higher knowledge, even for the highest, even for the Brahmavidya."[2]

The rationalistic scientific mind can transcend itself and become a conscious instrument of the Spirit only when it recognizes that true happiness and fullness of being does not lie in the use of Reason and Science for pre-

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 10. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

paring a life of utmost comfort and prosperity but much more and essentially in a luminous self-knowledge which will make us conscious and victorious in all the ranges of our existence, in an enlightened mastery of the outer as well as the inner worlds. This honesty and intellectual sincerity can come only when Reason and Science shed their obscurantist shell of mental prejudices and materialistic short-sightedness. Signs are already visible on the horizon towards such a change. Sri Aurobindo gave this prophetic assurance when he said about modern Materialism: "Since its very soul is the search for Knowledge, it will be unable to cry a halt; as it reaches the barriers of sense-knowledge and of the reasoning from sense-knowledge, its very rush will carry it beyond and the rapidity and sureness with which it has embraced the visible universe is only an earnest of the energy and success which we may hope to see repeated in the conquest of what lies beyond, once the stride is taken that crosses the barrier."[1]

It must, however, be clearly understood that if the materialistic mind obstinately clings on to its natural methods and is unwilling to come out of its grooves, it will not be able to fathom these inner discoveries and experiences of self-being and cosmic consciousness, not even the true mystery of telepathy and clairvoyance and all other supraphysical phenomena. Because the physical mentality does not have any experience of these things, all its attempts to sound the supraphysical Reality will prove futile, inevitably leading humanity into an embarrassing *cul-de-sac*.

"To know," says Sri Aurobindo, "to use rightly we must go beyond the truth of physical phenomenon and process, we must know what is within and behind it. For we are not merely embodied minds; there is a spiritual being, a spiritual principle, a spiritual plane of Nature. Into that we have to heighten our force of consciousness, to widen by that still more largely, even universally and infinitely, our range of being and our field of action, to take up by that our lower life and use it for greater ends and on a larger plan, in the light of the spiritual truth of existence."[2]

This is the true and right method of subjective knowledge which Yoga makes available to us — an Integral Yoga taking an integral view of existence, uplifting Mind in its all-embracing sweep and making it an enlightened sincere servant of the suprarational truths of existence and the spiritual knowledge and action. Supraphysical knowledge enhances and illumines world-knowledge, while world-knowledge culminates in the supraphysical behind the world. A Yoga that does not reconcile the two in a supreme transcendence, but exclusively concentrates on the Spirit and considers all else as an unreal spectre of the Self, will lead us into a "radical ascetic spiritual realisation" but not to a catholic integral and satisfactory solution of the truth of cosmic and individual existence.

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 13. [2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 731-32.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The ideal solution of the problem would be in a reaffirmation of the eternal truth of the Self which embraces but also surpasses the truth of Reason and Science. Philosophy then would become the handmaid of the Supreme Truth that underlies all existence, and its aim and function would be to arrange the data given by the various means of knowledge, excluding none, and put them into their "synthetic relation to the one Truth", supreme and universal, and eventually, to prepare a basis for spiritual realisation and the growing of the human being into his divine nature.

Science would preoccupy itself with throwing an additional light on the Spirit of the universe and the Divine's way in things and with new psychical research which will start from Spirit as the first and fundamental truth, and which will finally act upon life and matter with the pure power of mind and of that which surpasses it.

The Integral Yoga would eventually find the right harmony by developing "the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and psychical life of man may express the spiritual life through the utmost possible expansion of its own richness, power and complexity"[1] and finally by "pouring of the power of the spirit into the physical mould and mental instrument so that man may develop his man-hood into that true supermanhood which shall exceed our present state as much as this exceeds the animal state from which Science tells us we have issued".[2]

I end my speech by reading a short poem of Sri Aurobindo which points to this evolutionary ascent in words of revelatory significance:

ELECTRON[3]

The electron on which forms and worlds are built,
Leaped into being, a particle of God.
A spark from the eternal Energy spilt,
It is the Infinite's blind minute abode.

In that small flaming chariot Shiva rides.
The One devised innumerably to be;
His oneness in invisible forms he hides,
Time's tiny temples of eternity.

Atom and molecule in their unseen plan
Buttress an edifice of strange onenesses,

[1] "Our Ideal" (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 313.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 315.
[3] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 130.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Crystal and plant, insect and beast and man, —
Man on whom the World-Unity shall seize,

Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany
Of the timeless vastness of Infinity.

SRI AUROBINDO

SPEECH BY SACHCHIDANANDA MOHANTY

It is ironical that in an era of interplanetary travel, an increasing mass of mankind should continue to languish under the frightful spectre of poverty and death, that instead of a "generation of Peace" man should witness a diabolical race for lethal armaments: better and handier tools for mass annihilation. "Battle and rapine, ruin and massacre are still the fierce pastimes of man's warring tribes." Concepts like "humanism" and "altruism" have become mere words that exist in the dictionary of idealistic cranks to be used selectively for some moral or psychological expediency to hoodwink millions of starving automatons. The ever-widening gulf between a vulgar, ostentatious living on the one hand, and a life of perpetual misery and scarcity on the other, seems to stare at the conscience of man. At the same time, the cherished goal of dialectical materialism appears to have got stuck somewhere in the alluring mire of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". An unbridled economic growth, without a parallel growth of human character and values to sustain it, has thrust the world virtually to the verge of a precipice. An indiscriminate "ransacking" of the earth's valuable resources has led to an unprecedented ecological crisis which is fast turning this beautiful green planet of ours into some forbidding martian landscape. Gone is the myth of science as a universal panacea! Its twin high-priests, Materialism and Commercialism, are crackling like a dying flame with an unusual ferocity before being blown out forever in the dim corridors of time. But there is something which never seems to be lacking — an endless source of human stupidity! Yet beneath the seemingly placid crater of self-deception and complacency, there is an ominous rumbling. For men clinging to a convenient *status quo*, this spells disaster and turmoil but to the progressive vanguard of humanity, it only symbolises the creative labour of a New Age.

This is "the hour before the Gods awake" — a twilight hour that announces the death-knell of a decadent past but also the birth of a New Age in human evolution. Man, science, reason, all will have to pass through that mighty spiritual ordeal and then realise their loftiest perfection in that New Age, the Age of Truth.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

In this paper, I shall briefly examine and try to trace out the destined role of Reason, Science and Yoga in the future evolution of humanity.

What is science in its essence? Is Materialism an inevitable outcome of science or is it simply an accident of history? Why has science failed as a magic formula? Is there a basic contradiction between the scientific quest and the spiritual pursuit?

Science can be described as a body of systematized knowledge arrived at by the collection, observation, classification and causal explanation of phenomena in any sphere of existence. Since the very ground of physical science is Matter, it has initially to understand the physical universe in terms of Matter and the material senses alone. Like the Upanishadic seeker Bhrigu, man in his evolutionary progressive ascent has first to affirm Matter as the sole reality — *annam brahma*.

Now this view that phenomena are valid only if they have a recognisable and verifiable relation to the truth of external things leads to certain partial and misleading conclusions. The Infinite is reduced "to square and cube". As Sri Aurobindo observes: "pushed to its extreme, it would give to a stone or a plum-pudding a greater reality"[1] than to thought, love, courage, genius and greatness of the human soul. Or as it is more magnificently portrayed in the immortal lines of *Savitri*:

> "An ancient wisdom fades into the past,
> The ages' faith becomes an idle tale,
> God passes out of the awakened thought,
> An old discarded dream needed no more:
> Only she seeks mechanic nature's keys.
> Interpreting stone-laws inevitable
> She digs into Matter's hard concealing soil,
> To unearth the processes of all things done ...
> Of soul or spirit we have now no need:
> Matter is the admirable Reality." [2]

In contrast to science that seeks to unveil the mysteries of Matter, Yoga seeks a union with the Divine, the Absolute and the Transcendent. Says the Upanishad:

> न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनो
>
> "There sight travels not, nor speech, nor the mind." [3]

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 647. [2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), p. 253.
[3] *Kena Upanishad*, I. 3. Sri Aurobindo's translation. See *The Upanishads* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 12), p. 145.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Thus unlike the scientific quest which proceeds by intellect and logical reason, Yoga by its very nature must be subjective. "Thou Hassan hast found Him by reason and through means," said Rabia, the Sufi poet to the philosopher, "but I, immediately without mode or means." Yoga does not aim at intellectual knowledge but seeks a higher knowledge, *parā vidyā*, and a radical change of consciousness that will affect the very stuff of our phenomenal existence. Its methods are threefold: purification, concentration and identification. Vision and experience are its bedrock.

"Sheer blind faith," scoff the votaries of science. The mystic replies, "Faith, yes, but it is far from being blind. Illumined by a spiritual glow, it is very concrete, even more than 'the Intellect's hard and lustrous lid'." An apt description of this we find again in *Savitri*:

> "A million faces wears her knowledge here
> And every face is turbaned with a doubt....
> Her thought is an endless march without a goal.
> There is no summit on which she can stand
> And see in a single glance the Infinite's whole.
> An inconclusive play is Reason's toil,
> Each strong idea can use her as its tool;...
> Its rays are a lantern's lustres in the Night;
> She throws a glittering robe on Ignorance....
> A master and slave of stark phenomenon,
> She travels on the roads of erring sight
> Or looks upon a set mechanical world
> Constructed for her by her instruments.
> A bullock yoked in the cart of proven fact,
> She drags huge knowledge-bales through Matter's dust
> To reach utility's immense bazaar." [1]

"In any case," argues the Yogin, "does not the rationalist himself depend on faith, even if it be faith in his reason?" But the attacker with his characteristic shrewdness has evaded the objection by firing another question: "The Yogic knowledge is subjective, therefore unverifiable and vague." To this Sri Aurobindo has an exquisite reply:

"When the Peace of God descends on you, when the Divine Presence is there within you, when the Ananda rushes on you like a sea, when you are driven like a leaf before the wind by the breath of the Divine Force, when Love flowers out from you on all creation, when Divine Knowledge floods you with a Light which illumines and transforms in a moment all that was before

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book Two, Canto Ten, pp. 251-52.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

dark, sorrowful and obscure... everywhere you see, hear, touch only the Divine. Then you can much less doubt it or deny it than you can deny or doubt daylight or air or the sun in heaven... in the concrete experiences of the Divine, doubt is impossible." [1]

Like the swinging of a pendulum, Nature attains her ends by a constant oscillation between the opposing extremes and thereby arrives at an eventual synthesis. Thus the great service of rationalistic materialism has been to remove the hard crust of superstitious obscurantism, conventionalism and the outdated doctrines that cling parasitically to the unblemished Spirit. It came as a reaction against the past religions that had laid an unnatural stress on the individual, seeking a solitary salvation not in this world but in some remote other-worldly "Vrindavan", "Brahmaloka" or "Nirvana" at the cost of the growth, well-being, progress and prosperity of the collective life on earth. Besides, the greater our knowledge of the physical world, the surer becomes our foundation, for indeed, as Sri Aurobindo says, "The touch of Earth is always reinvigorating to the son of Earth, even when he seeks a supraphysical Knowledge."[2] It would therefore be too rash and premature on our part to condemn the rationalistic experiment outright as "a reckless and presumptuous aberration" and reject the powers of the logical reason and intelligence because until we are elevated to a higher realm and can replace the present imperfections with higher suprarational substitutes, they have their role to play in our human advancement; for indeed in our imperfect world "error is continually the handmaid and pathfinder of Truth".[3]

Since the urge of Materialism is a dispassionate search for Truth, it is likely to cross beyond the physical frontiers into the untrodden promising regions beyond; the materialistic gospel carries its own cure in the form of agnosticism, which, while admitting the unknown, proclaims that the physical senses are too inadequate to grasp it. For verily, sense-knowledge is only "the science of appearances" and, as in the Platonic allegory of the cave, even the appearances reveal little until man emerges from the dark caverns of ignorance to face the Sun of spiritual Truth. Then the result may be pictured as in these lines of *Savitri*:

"All staggered back into a sea of doubt;
This solid scheme melted in endless flux:
She had met the formless Power, inventor of forms;
Suddenly she stumbled upon things unseen:
A lightning from the undiscovered Truth
Startled her eyes with its perplexing glare...

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 168.
[2] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 11. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Once more we face the blank Unknowable.
In a crash of values, in a huge doom-crack,
In the sputter and scatter of her breaking work
She lost her clear conserved constructed world.
A quantum dance remained, a sprawl of chance
In Energy's stupendous tripping whirl:...
All grew a chaos, a heave and clash and strife....
All reeled into a world of Kali's dance."[1]

Today Matter is no longer considered *jaḍa* or inconscient, but "a structure of Energy" and what is Energy if not motion of power of a secret consciousness? Already remarkable discoveries are being made "that thin the wall between soul and matter".[2] More and more of supra-physical phenomena like telepathy and clairvoyance are acknowledged, however reluctantly, proving beyond doubt the existence of subtle supra-physical senses.

The question is: How far can science take us in this new adventure? It is, no doubt, possible to arrive at subtler truths of Matter with the help of more refined and sophisticated gadgets, but by themselves they cannot decipher the subjective script. As Sri Aurobindo says, "One can't dissect God or see the soul under a microscope."[3] Like the intellectual perception of Energy as the prime-moving Force, a certain line of rigorous analysis can arrive at the intellectual conviction of the Self. But by the very shortcoming of the logical reason, this will always be precarious, for indeed " 'the spirit of doubt' is insatiable and unappeasable".[4]

In its attempt to understand and explain Yoga, Reason adopts one of two methods: either it dismisses the whole thing as "a mystical nonsense" or, as Sri Aurobindo describes, it prattles like "a child who is trying to shape into the mould of his own habitual notions the life of adults" or blunders like "an ignorant mind which thinks fit to criticise patronisingly or adversely the labours of a profound thinker or a great scientist".[5] It can at best classify and describe but explain it cannot, for always the form is grasped and the intrinsic kernel missed.

This is not to suggest that Reason can be discarded. Indeed it can be a great aid in abolishing much of the external fossilised paraphernalia, dead customs and sterile gospels of religion that often stifle the spiritual efflorescence itself. But beyond this negative function, it can hardly serve any positive purpose. It can never succeed in creating a rational religion. A rational religion is a monstrosity and a contradiction in terms. Like the suprarational

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book Two, Canto Ten, pp. 254-55.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 233-34.
[3] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 201.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 163. [5] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 120.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

in man, the infrarational too has its truth though obscurely veiled. It has to be sublimated and transformed and not repressed under the artificial yoke of Reason.

Reason can help to distinguish spiritual Truth from the pseudo-spiritual imitation. To fulfil its role it must recognise its inherent shortcomings and allow the descent of a higher Power till, as Sri Aurobindo writes, "where it was blind it can see, where it was deaf it can hear, where it was insensible it can feel, and where it was baffled, uncertain, questioning, disappointed it can have joy, fulfilment, certitude and peace".[1]

Thus Reason and Yoga need not be poles apart. For the spiritualised Reason liberated from its narrow prison-house can truly act as a bright star pointing at more luminous galaxies.

Today, happily, old decadent systems are fast crumbling under the massive "streaming light" of a "symbol dawn". It is the advent of a New Consciousness, manifesting a New Age, that will embrace life in its entirety. Physical Science has played its part and a very important part at that. But before it can find its place in the New Age, it must needs outgrow its present obscurantist limitations. To conclude, in Sri Aurobindo's words:

"If science is to turn her face towards the Divine, it must be a new science not yet developed which deals directly with the forces of the life-world and of Mind and so arrives at what is beyond Mind."[2]

Then will the true marriage of Science and Yoga be possible and "In Matter shall be lit the spirit's glow".[3]

SPEECH BY MINOTI MOHANTY

There is a remarkable dynamism in all the corners of the earth today; one does not have to make any special effort in order to become aware of it. If we try to find the cause of this universal dynamism we cannot fail to discover that it is the work of the intellect or reason — the genius of the brain. Yet it is interesting to note that in spite of the immense advance in knowledge made by centuries of intellectual endeavour there still remains much more to be known. For not only has the field of knowledge widened, but man has arrived at a stage where he is forced to realize the limiations of his intellectual reason. The adamant rationalist does not admit these limitations easily but the more awakened thinker pauses and asks: "Is there an end to the field of know-

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 171. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[3] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book Two, Canto Four, p. 55.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ledge? Can there be a significance behind the existence of the universe and will man ever arrive at the truth of the purpose of his being?"

The history of the world will show us that man has always striven towards a better and a happier existence. Being predominantly physical and vital in the earlier stages of evolution, he believed that his happiness depended on material circumstances and therefore he worked for their betterment. Since then he has continued to follow the same track and the increasing inquisitiveness of his brain due to the development of the rational mind, especially in the modern Western world, has assisted him to acquire more and more information about the material universe. In the course of this inquiry he has come across certain bewildering supra-physical phenomena that seem to be contrary to his materialistic doctrine.

But not so in all parts of the world! In the Asiatic countries, especially in India, people have always had a strong belief in supra-physical, occult and spiritual phenomena. This has always been the dominant trend in their temperament, thanks to the constant resurgence of saints and prophets. The wisdom of the ancient sages, derived from an impulse towards perfection, the search after pure Truth and unmixed Bliss, the sense of a secret immortality and the divination of Godhead, still dominates the Indian mind.

A similar belief prevailed in the West in the distant age of the Mysteries but it has long been forgotten. In the last century the European mind has even considered the development in the East, especially in the spiritual realm, as irrationality and pure nonsense, and even though circumstances force it to examine and recognise it, there is yet a tremendous resistance to it in the general European temperament.

In the East as well as in the West, there has been a continuous endeavour for the acquisition of increasing knowledge. Being dependent on reason only, the modern Western mind has never arrived at the ultimate Truth. The ancient Eastern mind was the seeing mind — the intuitive mind. The philosopher was the seer. The modern scientific mind is prone to discard all intuitive knowledge as irrational, but we may ask: in what way is it irrational? It is actually a direct knowledge belonging to a supra-rational order of existence to which the ordinary intellectual standards do not apply. All the ancient mystical and spiritual seekers were aware of this fact and so they tried to attain that knowledge in their own intuitive way. To such a science — for indeed it is scientific — they gave the name Yoga, the purpose of which was the realisation of union with the Divine and thereby of the true knowledge — the highest knowledge — *parāvidyā*.

But ordinarily what is meant by knowledge is an intellectual understanding of the facts of life, mind and matter and the laws that govern them. This knowledge is based on our fallible sense-perception and accepted mainly for its practical utility and efficiency because by knowing about the secrets

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of Nature we are better able to regulate our external life. Yogic knowledge transcends this striving: its aim is to know the Supreme, the Divine, the Infinite and the Absolute.

The great seers of India, who could identify themselves with the Cosmic Being and enter into the cosmic consciousness were possessors of this knowledge. After that stage they used to pass into the still higher world-transcending consciousness and experience the Supreme Brahman. But because of the suddenness of the experience and the unpreparedness of the mind lacking the experience of the intermediary transitions, they often felt a sense of unreality of the world. Thus there came a rejection of the universe and an abstention from worldly activities. We see this happening with the ascetics of India and in the theory of the cosmic illusion of the Buddhistic philosophy. This view is diametrically opposite to that of the European materialistic philosophy, and neither gives us the true knowledge.

Yet it is important to note that from the standpoint of progressive evolution both have had their reason of existence. The rationalistic materialism has been of enormous value to human progress, for without it man, entering into the inner consciousness, is likely to fall a prey to the most perilous distortions and misleading imaginations, thus making any advancement in the path of true knowledge impossible. Moreover, the realisation of something beyond matter comes from modern science itself pushing beyond the narrow limits within which it has till recently confined itself.

The problem has existed up to now because until recent times the rationalists and the scientists have championed matter as the sole reality and the ascetic spiritual seers were equally vehement in their refusal of the material life and worldly existence. This was essentially a problem of harmony. A harmonious synthesis of both these perceptions without their negations would show us the truth in its totality.

The wonderful synthesizing answer is found in Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine*, where he first explains that life is a form of veiled consciousness and therefore there is an urge in Nature to manifest it. In the evolutionary process she has arrived at creating man. Then she must pass on to the superman or the gnostic being whose life would be a manifestation of God on earth. All forms of existence being the manifestation of God, we cannot reject worldly existence like the ascetics. This knowledge would make us experience the Brahman in the individual, as well as in the universal. Each individual being with his physical, vital, mental and psychic parts is in his essential reality He indeed, and the universe too is the play and form and cosmic self-expression of the same Brahman. All paradoxes cease to exist here. Here is a vision of the Absolute who is at once Purusha and Prakriti, the dynamic and the static, the One and the Many. These things are to the limited mind irreconcilable opposites. In order to understand and integrate

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

them it must cease to reason and quieting itself try to make of itself a fit instrument for receiving the higher knowledge.

And then, says Sri Aurobindo: "The eternal paradox and eternal truth of a divine life in an animal body, an immortal aspiration or reality inhabiting a mortal tenement, a single and universal consciousness representing itself in limited minds and divided egos, a transcendent, indefinable, timeless and spaceless Being who alone renders time and space and cosmos possible, and in all these the higher truth realisable by the lower term, justify themselves to the deliberate reason as well as to the persistent instinct or intuition of mankind."[1]

Later, Sri Aurobindo specifies his point by saying: "What is that work and result, if not a self-involution of Consciousness in form and a self-evolution out of form so as to actualise some mighty possibility in the universe which it has created? And what is its will in Man if not a will to unending Life, to unbounded Knowledge, to unfettered Power? Science itself begins to dream of the physical conquest of death, expresses an insatiable thirst for knowledge, is working out something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity."[2] And this indeed is the work of the divine Will in man, the vast cosmic impulse which labours to fulfil the divine mission.

So we have a clear perception of the relation between reason, science and Yoga. We have studied their inherent truths and their limitations. We have seen Sri Aurobindo making a beautiful synthesis of them and the way to knowledge is clear and safe for the future generations. It is now for us to start moving towards its fulfilment and not retreat because it is as yet obscure in its outward workings or it is arduous or difficult to justify by tangible results. It is obvious that whatever be the circumstances, the work is bound to go on and the sooner we rise from this stage of ignorance and partial intelligence and become possessors of the self-luminous Truth and the self-guiding Will, the better will it be for us and the human race. For this is certainly a stage which we are bound to enter for the realisation of the final purpose of the divinisation of mankind and the establishment upon earth of "The Life Divine."

In conclusion, I would like to read a poem of Sri Aurobindo in which he points to this divine destiny of mankind and earth in most wonderful words:

EVOLUTION[3]

All is not finished in the Unseen's decree!
A mind beyond our mind demands our ken;

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 4. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[3] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 164.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

A life of unimagined harmony
Awaits, concealed, the grasp of unborn men.

The crude beginnings of the lifeless earth
And mindless stirrings of the plant and tree
Prepared our thought; thought for a godlike birth
Broadens the mould of our mortality.

A might no human will or force could gain,
A knowledge seated in eternity,
A joy beyond our struggle and our pain
Is this earth-hampered creature's destiny.

O Thou who climbedst to mind from the dull stone,
Turn to the miracled summits yet unwon.

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

Discoveries of Science

I

Only by electric hordes your world is run?
But they are motes and spark-whirls of a Light,
A Fire of which your nebula and your sun
Are glints and flame-drops scattered eremite.

Veiled by the unseen Light act other Powers,
An Air of endless movement unbegun
Expanding and contracting in Time-hours,
And the intangible ether of the One.

These surface findings — screen-phenomenon —
Are Nature's offered reasons but behind
Her occult mysteries lurk safe unknown
To the crude handling of the empiric Mind

All yet discovered are but mire and trace
Of the eternal Energy in her race.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

II

How shall ascending nature near her goal?
Not through man's stumbling tardy intellect
Patient all forms and powers to dissect
But by the surer vision of his soul.

An algebra of mind, a scheme of sense,
A symbol language without depth or wings,
A power to handle deftly outward things
Are our scant earnings of intelligence.

The Truth is greater and asks deeper ways.
A sense that gathers all in its own being,
A close and luminous touch, an intimate seeing,
A Thought flung free from the words' daedal maze,

A tranquil heart in sympathy with all,
A will one-pointed, wide, imperial.

III

Our science is an abstract cold and brief
That cuts in formulas the living whole.
It has a brain and head but not a soul:
It sees all things in outward carved relief.

But how without its depths can the world be known?
The visible has its roots in the unseen
And each invisible hides what it can mean
In a yet deeper invisible, unshown.

The objects that you prove are not their form.
Each is a mass of forces thrown in shape.
The forces caught, their inner lines escape
In a fathomless consciousness beyond mind's norm.

Probe it and you shall meet a Being still
Infinite, nameless, mute, unknowable.

(*Collected Poems*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 5, pp. 166-68.)

***

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"The sharp division which practical experience and long habit of mind have created between Spirit and Matter has no longer any fundamental reality. ... The two are one: Spirit is the soul and reality of that which we sense as Matter; Matter is a form and body of that which we realise as Spirit."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, pp. 240-41.)

***

"Matter reveals itself to the realising thought and to the subtilised senses as the figure and body of Spirit, — Spirit in its self-formative extension. Spirit reveals itself through the same consenting agents as the soul, the truth, the essence of Matter. Both admit and confess each other as divine, real and essentially one."

(*Ibid.*, p. 26.)

***

"Brahman is not only the cause and supporting power and indwelling principle of the universe, he is also its material and its sole material. Matter also is Brahman and it is nothing other than or different from Brahman. If indeed Matter were cut off from Spirit, this would not be so; but it is...only a final form and objective aspect of the divine Existence with all of God ever present in it and behind it."

(*Ibid.*, pp. 241-42.)

***

"This nescience of Matter is a veiled, an involved or somnambulist consciousness which contains all the latent powers of the Spirit. In every particle, atom, molecule, cell of Matter there lives hidden and works unknown all the omniscience of the Eternal and all the omnipotence of the Infinite."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 15.)

***

"The affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in mortal existence can have no base unless we recognise not only eternal Spirit as the inhabitant of this bodily mansion, the wearer of this mutable robe, but

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

accept Matter of which it is made, as a fit and noble material out of which He weaves constantly His garbs, builds recurrently the unending series of His mansions."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, p. 6.)

⁂

"Earth-life is the self-chosen habitation of a great Divinity and his aeonic will is to change it from a blind prison into his splendid mansion and high heaven-reaching temple."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 18.)

⁂

"Matter is but a form of consciousness; nevertheless solve not the object entirely into its subjectivity. Reject not the body of God, O God lover, but keep it for thy joy; for His body too is delightful even as His spirit."

(*Ibid.*, p. 42.)

⁂

"If modern Materialism were simply an unintelligent acquiescence in the material life, the advance might be indefinitely delayed. But since its very soul is the search for Knowledge, it will be unable to cry a halt; as it reaches the barriers of sense-knowledge and of the reasoning from sense-knowledge, its very rush will carry it beyond and the rapidity and sureness with which it has embraced the visible universe is only an earnest of the energy and success which we may hope to see repeated in the conquest of what lies beyond, once the stride is taken that crosses the barrier. We see already that advance in its obscure beginnings."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, p. 13.)

⁂

"Science itself begins to dream of the physical conquest of death, expresses an insatiable thirst for knowledge, is working out something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity. Space and Time are contracting to the vanishing-point in its works, and it strives in a hundred ways to make man the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

master of circumstance and so lighten the fetters of causality. The idea of limit, of the impossible begins to grow a little shadowy and it appears instead that whatever man constantly wills, he must in the end be able to do; for the consciousness in the race eventually finds the means. It is not in the individual that this omnipotence expresses itself, but the collective Will of mankind that works out with the individual as a means. And yet when we look more deeply, it is not any conscious Will of the collectivity, but a superconscious Might that uses the individual as a centre and means, the collectivity as a condition and field. What is this but the God in man, the infinite Identity, the multitudinous Unity, the Omniscient, the Omnipotent, who having made man in His own image, with the ego as a centre of working, with the race, the collective Narayana,[1] the *viśvamānava*[2] as the mould and circumscription, seeks to express in them some image of the unity, omniscience, omnipotence which are the self-conception of the Divine? 'That which is immortal in mortals is a God and established inwardly as an energy working out in our divine powers.'[3] It is this vast cosmic impulse which the modern world, without quite knowing its own aim, yet serves in all its activities and labours subconsciously to fulfil."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 18, p. 14.)

*
**

"This preoccupation with life and matter is at the beginning right and necessary because the first step that man has to take is to know and possess this physical existence as well as he can by applying his thought and intelligence to such experience of it as his sense-mind can give to him; but this is only a preliminary step and, if we stop there, we have made no real progress: we are where we were and have gained only more physical elbow-room to move about in and more power for our mind to establish a relative knowledge and an insufficient and precarious mastery and for our life-desire to push things about and jostle and hustle around amid the throng of physical forces and existences. The utmost widening of a physical objective knowledge, even if it embrace the most distant solar system and the deepest layers of the earth and sea and the most subtle powers of material substance and energy, is not the essential gain for us, not the one thing which it is most needful for us to acquire. That is why the gospel of materialism, in spite of the dazzling triumphs of physical Science, proves itself always in the end a vain and help-

[1] A name of Vishnu, who, as the God in man, lives constantly associated in a dual unity with Nara, the human being.

[2] The universal man.

[3] *Rig Veda*, IV. 2.1.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

less creed, and that too is why physical Science itself with all its achievements, though it may accomplish comfort, can never achieve happiness and fullness of being for the human race. Our true happiness lies in the true growth of our whole being, in a victory throughout the total range of our existence, in mastery of the inner as well as and more than the outer, the hidden as well as the overt nature; our true completeness comes not by describing wider circles on the plane where we began, but by transcendence. It is for this reason that after the first necessary foundation in life and matter, we have to heighten our force of consciousness, deepen, widen, subtilise it; we must first liberate our mental selves and enter into a freer, finer and nobler play of our mental existence: for the mental is much more than the physical our true existence, because we are even in our instrumental or expressive nature predominantly mind and not matter, mental much rather than physical beings. That growth into the full mental being is the first transitional movement towards human perfection and freedom; it does not actually perfect, it does not liberate the soul, but it lifts us one step out of the material and vital absorption and prepares the loosening of the hold of the Ignorance."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 729-30.)

*
**

"For mind itself is not enough; even its largest play of intelligence creates only a qualified half-light. A surface mental knowledge of the physical universe is a still more imperfect guide; for the thinking animal it might be enough, but not for a race of mental beings in labour of a spiritual evolution. Even the truth of physical things cannot be entirely known, nor can the right use of our material existence be discovered by physical Science and an outward knowledge alone or made possible by the mastery of physical and mechanical processes alone: to know, to use rightly we must go beyond the truth of physical phenomenon and process, we must know what is within and behind it. For we are not merely embodied minds; there is a spiritual being, a spiritual principle, a spiritual plane of Nature. Into that we have to heighten our force of consciousness, to widen by that still more largely, even universally and infinitely, our range of being and our field of action, to take up by that our lower life and use it for greater ends and on a larger plan, in the light of the spiritual truth of existence. Our labour of mind and struggle of life cannot come to any solution until we have gone beyond the obsessing lead of an inferior Nature, integralised our natural being in the being and consciousness, learned to utilise our natural instruments by the force and for the joy of the Spirit. Then only can the constitutional ignorance, the ignorance of the real build of our existence from which we suffer, change into a true and effective

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

knowledge of our being and becoming. For what we are is spirit, — at present using mind predominantly, life and body subordinately, with matter for our original field but not our only field of experience; but this is only at present. Our imperfect mental instrumentation is not the last word of our possibilities; for there are in us, dormant or invisibly and imperfectly active, other principles beyond mind and closer to the spiritual nature, there are more direct powers and luminous instruments, there is a higher status, there are greater ranges of dynamic action than those that belong to our present physical, vital and mental existence. These can become our own status, part of our being, they can be principles, powers and instruments of our own enlarged nature. But for that it is not enough to be satisfied with a vague or an ecstatic ascent into spirit or a formless exaltation through the touch of its infinities; their principle has to evolve, as life has evolved, as mind has evolved, and organise its own instrumentation, its own satisfaction. Then we shall possess the true constitution of our being and we shall have conquered the Ignorance."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 831-32.)

*
**

"An intellectual approach to the highest knowledge, the mind's possession of it, is an indispensable aid to this movement of Nature in the human being. Ordinarily, on our surface, man's chief instrument of thought and action is the reason, the observing, understanding and arranging intellect. In any total advance or evolution of the spirit, not only the intuition, insight, inner sense, the heart's devotion, a deep and direct life-experience of the things of the spirit have to be developed, but the intellect also must be enlightened and satisfied; our thinking and reflecting mind must be helped to understand, to form a reasoned and systematised idea of the goal, the method, the principles of this highest development and activity of our nature and the truth of all that lies behind it. Spiritual realisation and experience, an intuitive and direct knowledge, a growth of inner consciousness, a growth of the soul and of an intimate soul-perception, soul-vision and a soul-sense, are indeed the proper means of this evolution: but the support of the reflective and critical reason is also of great importance; if many can dispense with it, because they have a vivid and direct contact with inner realities and are satisfied with experience and insight, yet in the whole movement it is indispensable. If the supreme truth is a spiritual Reality, then the intellect of man needs to know what is the nature of that original Truth and the principle of its relations to the rest of existence, to ourselves and the universe. The intellect is not capable by itself of bringing us into

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

touch with the concrete spiritual reality, but it can help by a mental formulation of the truth of the Spirit which explains it to the mind and can be applied even in the more direct seeking: this help is of a capital importance."

(*The Life Divine*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 19, pp. 877-78.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THIRTIETH SEMINAR

21 April 1974

SUBJECT:

"Importance of the Individual."

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

Our conception of the importance of the individual and the significance of his life depends entirely upon our conception of his true self and nature. If, following modern Science, we consider man to be merely a physical being, with a mind, no doubt, but a mind which is itself a product of matter, then he can hardly have any worthwhile significance, for as a physical being he is no more than a tiny trifling creature with a transient existence in the boundless vastness of the physical universe. As Sri Aurobindo puts it vividly: "he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe."[1]

If, on the contrary, we consider him to be in his real self and nature a soul, a spiritual being, then his importance becomes immeasurable, his value illimitable, his significance incalculable, not only for his own self but for the whole human race and the entire universe. For then he would not be a petty insignificant creature as he appears to be in his outer physical self but an immortal being as vast as the universe and, in his highest ascension, even capable of transcending the universe and of identifying himself with the Supreme, with God. As proclaimed by the Isha Upanishad in a luminous phrase, man in his essential being is God, *so'hamasmi*.[2]

The individual, thus, is a double being with a double nature, one material and the other spiritual, and the importance we attach to him depends upon which of the two we take to be his real self and nature. As a material being he is utterly insignificant but as a spiritual being he is of supreme worth. As Sri Aurobindo says: "Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything."[3]

But it is not necessary to make a sharp distinction between these two selves of man and arrive at an irreconcilable contradiction between them. For, in a larger and more comprehensive conception both of them are necessary stages of man's evolutionary progress, each indispensable at its proper place. Though in his essential being man is a soul, yet in his evolutionary career on earth he begins as a material physical being. But the apparent insignificance of his physical being is not conclusive because it hides within itself his soul-reality. And in his progressive evolution this physical being is destined not

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 43.
[2] "He am I". *Isha Upanishad*, Verse 16.
[3] *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 20.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

only to reveal the spiritual reality which it now conceals, but, undergoing a spiritual transmutation, to become itself spiritualised, divinised, deified. The two selves that man now has will then become unified and integralised, annulling forever their apparent contradiction.

Thus if we consider man's physical being not as it now is in its present appearance but as it is destined to be in its future evolution, then there is no reason to stress its unimportance and insignificance as a purely external materialistic view of it compels us to do. Rather, holding firmly to a clear perception of its future divinity, we should emphasize and strive for the advent of its glorious godhead. As Sri Aurobindo says, "the sons of Death have to know themselves as the children of Immortality."[1]

This, in fact, is the real aim of the individual's life and his importance increases in proportion as he becomes more and more aware of it and consciously strives to realise it.

This is the importance of the individual in reference to his own self and his evolutionary destiny. But the individual is not an isolated being nor does he live an isolated life. His being and life are intimately interrelated with those of the collectivity of which he is a member. What is his importance in relation to this collectivity, whether it be his social group or the nation or the whole humanity?

A number of social and political thinkers, both ancient and modern, have put forward the view that the individual is merely a means or an instrument for the realisation of the collectivity's ends, that his life and existence have no significance other than this and that the collectivity is therefore fully justified in entirely subordinating him for its own good. These thinkers invariably minimize or belittle the importance of the individual by reducing him to a mere cell of the collective body.

Without going into details, I shall only state that this immolation of the individual at the altar of the collectivity is, according to Sri Aurobindo, an altogether false and pernicious doctrine, especially in the form which it has taken in modern times of completely suppressing the liberties of the individual by the collectivist state. It is, in his view, a regressive trend fraught with grave danger for humanity's evolutionary future, for this fundamental reason that it is only through the free individual that the collectivity achieves its forward progress. As he puts it:

"The individual is indeed the key of the evolutionary movement; for it is the individual who finds himself, who becomes conscious of the Reality. The movement of the collectivity is a largely subconscious mass-movement; it has to formulate and express itself through the individuals to become conscious: its general mass-consciousness is always less evolved than the consciousness

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 685.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of its most developed individuals, and it progresses in so far as it accepts their impress or develops what they develop."[1]

This being the inevitable law of evolution, the collectivity can only move forward on the track laid open for it by the individual pioneers.

This then is the immense importance of the individual in his relation to the collectivity that it is only through him that the collectivity and eventually the human race can realise their divine destiny.

SPEECH BY MAURICE SHUKLA

Humanity is passing today through one of those momentous periods of crisis in which a transition from one established order to a higher one is being prepared. Periods of radical change in human history have invariably been periods of crisis. But the nature of the present crisis is different from the previous ones, since it is one in which, as Sri Aurobindo says, is concealed the choice of humanity's destiny. The cause of the present crisis, which has propagated itself in all the fields of human life, is not in the external economic or political system — the oil crisis, corruption, unemployment, financial insecurity, inflation, etc. — but lies much deeper. It is a crisis of consciousness pressing for an evolutionary leap from the old established order and the old life-style into the New Order and the New Life of the Future. It is a critical period of decision which if not heeded would end in the ruin of the present civilisation. The significant messages of the Mother ring back to our ears — "Are you ready?", "The choice is imperative: Truth or the abyss" — and if such an impending catastrophe is to be avoided, it is the individual alone, that is to say you and me, that can take this leap and, saving humanity from the dark abyss, lift it upwards into the refulgent heights of an earthly empyrean, and make the God-plan a living manifest reality.

The progressive self-unfolding of a luminous Divine Consciousness in the world is the meaning of this ceaselessly evolving existence. The involution of a superconscient Spirit in inconscient Matter and a subsequent gradual evolution of the secret Spirit out of inconscient Matter is "the key-word of the earth's riddle". For the joy of self-discovery, the supreme Spirit or the Brahman plunged itself into dark 'caverns measureless to man' and set out on a thrilling adventure by which it would regain its pristine state of Unity, Consciousness and Bliss.

The universe and the individual are the two essential formations through which the supreme Brahman descends into involution and through which

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1050.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

again it ascends to its full self-revelation in evolution. But both the universe and the individual are necessary to each other in this ascent. "Universe," says Sri Aurobindo, "seeks in infinite extension the divine totality it feels itself to be but cannot entirely realise; for in extension existence drives at a pluralistic sum of itself which can neither be the primal nor the final unit, but only a recurring decimal without end or beginning. Therefore it creates in itself a self-conscious concentration of the All through which it can aspire. In the conscious individual Prakriti turns back to perceive Purusha, World seeks after Self; God having entirely become Nature, Nature seeks to become progressively God." [1]

On the other hand, the individual also is impelled to realise himself by means of the universe. Not only is the universe "his foundation, his means, his field, the stuff of the divine Work; but also ... he must necessarily universalise and impersonalise himself in order to manifest the divine All which is his reality." [2]

There is something very peculiar in the upward ascent of the evolving individual. As he moves upward there emerges an increasing complexity in his personality, but it is always coupled with an ever-widening order and harmony. With the struggling emergence of Life from Matter and Mind from Life there is an increasing effort at self-consciousness and self-mastery.

Man, though oblivious of the true nature of Reality, has nevertheless persisted in his restless endeavour, groping through as it were, to find a stable permanent Reality behind the ever-changing flux of existence. Dissatisfied with materialism and impressed by the recent discoveries of evolutionary processes, the modern scientific mind posited Life and not Matter as the one underlying fundamental Reality. But the apparent blindness and unintelligence of the evolutionary developments disqualified Life from being the ultimate, self-possessed, luminous, all-knowing Reality. The scientists then discovered that there lay a greater Power than Matter and Life — a guiding Force and Consciousness vaguely termed "Mind" or "Intelligence" — that transcended the mechanical blind movements of its predecessors. Mind was thus probed but in spite of its greater light and greater ordered freedom it has not been found to be the ultimate Reality. Humanity has arrived thus far. It is at this critical juncture that, in order to proceed further on the evolutionary scale, it is compelled to find and possess a more luminous and psychologically satisfying Power as its guide on the path ahead. But it has become so accustomed to the processes of the Mind and working with Reason as the supreme guide that it is almost impossible for it to reconcile itself to the idea that there exists a state of being deep inside each individual which harmonises all contraries and clashing dualities and which removes all present limitations

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 45.
[2] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and shortcomings by bestowing on him a supernormal consciousness. That the entities Matter, Life and Mind could be parts of a greater harmonious totality and unity, is a proposition that it cannot accept with ease. But psychological experience shows that there is a range of consciousness which far exceeds the surface mental-egoistic consciousness in which man is so miserably engrossed today.

It is by individual effort alone that the liberation from this evolutionary deadlock can be initially made possible. The individual is the expression and finite concentration of the all-pervading and infinitely extended Consciousness through which an effective manifestation and action of that Higher Power is made possible.

But if the individual is to become an effective centre of divine action, he must strive to transcend his limitations of mind and ego. However, to condemn the ego as an unnecessary freakish accident, an abscess on the face of evolution, would not be justified. The creation of a strong sense of separative existence in the midst of the indeterminate diffusion of the subconscient universal Nature was not merely an evolutionary off-shoot but an inevitable, indispensable, evolutionary necessity. Without it the individual would not have been able to disengage himself from the over-powering pressure of the lower subconscient Nature. The emergence of the ego marks the individualisation or personalisation of the conscious being out of indeterminate Nature in evolution. It is the lynch-pin of the wheel of Nature which gives coherence and consistency to what might otherwise appear as a flux of floating impressions. Because of the formation of this separative being the truly conscious stage in evolution could begin.

But the ego and the Mind are limited transitional instruments for the individual in his quest for self-fulfilment. The ego cannot give a living permanent sense of unity and harmony; what it is capable of giving is a semblance of a superficial unity. So the egoistic consciousness in the lower Ignorance has to be exceeded and the true self in the Higher Knowledge realised if the divine design is to be faithfully executed. But where to look for that Higher Knowledge and that eternal status of the true self? "Knowledge," says Sri Aurobindo, "is there concealed in the Ignorance itself; it has rather to be unveiled than acquired."

Man must first get a clear picture of the enmeshing net of Ignorance he is trapped in, only then can he consciously make an attempt towards Knowledge. Human ignorance, according to Sri Aurobindo, is sevenfold.

"We are ignorant of the Absolute which is the source of all being and becoming; we take partial facts of being, temporal relations of the becoming for the whole truth of existence, — that is the first, the original ignorance. We are ignorant of the spaceless, timeless, immobile and immutable Self; we take

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the constant mobility and mutation of the cosmic becoming in Time and Space for the whole truth of existence, — that is the second, the cosmic ignorance. We are ignorant of our universal self, the cosmic existence, the cosmic consciousness, our infinite unity with all being and becoming; we take our limited egoistic mentality, vitality, corporeality for our true self and regard everything other than that as not-self, — that is the third, the egoistic ignorance. We are ignorant of our eternal becoming in Time; we take this little life in a small span of Time, in a petty field of Space, for our beginning, our middle and our end, — that is the fourth, the temporal ignorance. Even within this brief temporal becoming we are ignorant of our large and complex being, of that in us which is superconscient, subconscient, intraconscient, circumconscient to our surface becoming; we take that surface becoming with its small selection of overtly mentalised experiences for our whole existence, — that is the fifth, the psychological ignorance. We are ignorant of the true constitution of our becoming; we take the mind or life or body or any two of these or all three for our true principle or the whole account of what we are, losing sight of that which constitutes them and determines by its occult presence and is meant to determine sovereignly by its emergence their operations, — that is the sixth, the constitutional ignorance. As a result of all these ignorances, we miss the true knowledge, government and enjoyment of our life in the world; we are ignorant in our thought, will, sensations, actions, return wrong or imperfect responses at every point to the questionings of the world, wander in a maze of errors and desires, strivings and failures, pain and pleasure, sin and stumbling, follow a crooked road, grope blindly for a changing goal, — that is the seventh, the practical ignorance."[1]

Of these seven ignorances we would best concentrate mainly on the psychological and constitutional ignorances because they are the most important, in the sense that if they were removed the remaining ones would naturally disappear.

Our understanding of the psychological nature of the individual is extremely limited and superficial. We see him only in his surface existence which is "a mere result of selective outer experiences, an imperfect sounding-board or a hasty, incompetent and fragmentary translation of a little out of the much that we are".[2] What we know of the individual is an insignificant amalgamation of certain dominant mental and vital ideas, desires and emotions arranged in a "disorganised order". The outer mind, vital and the physical body are according to our understanding his first and last constituents. This is a totally false view of his personality. Even the Western psychologists have arrived at the conclusion that man's consciousness is not only what it outwardly appears to be but that it is like an iceberg. Sri Aurobindo has a still

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), pp. 654-55. [2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 223.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

more felicitous and appropriate simile for this. He says: "Our mind and ego are like the crown and dome of a temple jutting out from the waves while the great body of the building is submerged under the surface of the waters." [1]

The outer egoistic personality is a distorted, fragmentary projection from within for a surface use. The divinities are seated deep within the temple of the being, but by unduly stressing the frontal consciousness the individual eclipses and obscures those vast inner ranges in which lie hidden the endless riches of conscious knowledge, power and bliss. But to realise the extensive powers and potentialities that are concealed within, he has to unlock the door of his inner consciousness. Only then will he perceive that behind our normal external consciousness there stretch out vast regions of wondrous realities.

On all the levels of being there is an outer and a corresponding inner consciousness. Behind the external mental, vital and physical states of being there is a subliminal state of being where man becomes aware of an inner mind, an inner vital and an inner or subtle physical.

The subliminal mind is much more effective, complex and luminous instrument of knowledge than the outer mind; it is not bounded or hampered by the limitations that the latter is subjected to. Its workings are of a wider, more profoundly intuitive and powerfully intimate nature. The subliminal life or vital being is not "cabined between the narrow boundaries of our physical birth and death".[2] Similarly the subliminal physical, behind the external physical body, is more subtle, self-sustaining and powerful; this subtle physical in fact is the source of the substance not only of our physical but of our vital and mental sheaths as well. Our subliminal part — although it has obscure and submerged regions below it, the chaotic inarticulate subconscious and the nether original Inconscience — is nevertheless in its own brighter realms a consciousness much more in possession of itself and things than the outward mental, vital or physical consciousness. Nothing escapes its grasp and perception; all that touches or influences us is caught and absorbed by this vigilant self-conscious part. It retains the memory of all the experiences that the outer personality has missed or forgotten, ready to hand for use. The subliminal intelligence is not dependent on the physical senses for knowledge and perception, it has extra-sensorial powers at its command which give man a more profound, direct and intuitively intimate understanding of things. Its "comprehensive extended memory", its "subtle-sense and perception", its "intensive selecting intelligence, will and self-consciousness" are more wide, developed and self-mastered than the instrumental capacities of the outer being.

This inner subliminal being is supported from behind by a subliminal soul which is not the outer desire-soul which craves for an ego-centric understanding and satisfaction of desires and ideas and feelings. That subliminal

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 556. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 220.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

soul, often called the psychic being, is neither the mind nor the vital being nor the body but something which supports all these and "holds in itself the opening and flowering of the essence of all these to their own peculiar delight of self, to light, to love, to joy and beauty and to a refined purity of being".[1] It absorbs the quintessence or *rasa* of all experience and stores it within itself as a source of replenishing joy, knowledge, and strength. Our true individuality lies in this part of the being situated deep within the inmost temple of the heart. The soul is a spark of the Divine Himself, the flame of the Godhead ever burning in us and aspiring and striving ceaselessly to turn Ignorance and suffering into Knowledge and Bliss by its divine alchemy. The soul is "the concealed Witness and Control, the hidden Guide, the Daemon of Socrates, the inner light or inner voice of the mystic".[2] Delegated as the deputy of the Supreme, it is the true original Conscience, greater and more profound than the "conventional conscience of the moralist" and it always takes us nearer to a world of an ever-increasing Light, Beauty, Harmony, Love, Freedom, Knowledge, Power, Truth and Bliss. The mystic seers, sages and saints live guided by this psychic principle. Poets and artists in their moments of grandeur and inspiration create from this inexhaustible source of Beauty and Joy. An intimate awareness of our psychic being opens us to the knowledge of the self and the world and the Divine. Bathed by its effulgent light and pure ecstatic love, we are made ready instruments of the Supreme for transfiguring earthly life into life divine.

The central being of man has two aspects — the Jivatman or the individual Self which is self-existent and above the evolving manifestation and the psychic being or the Chaitya Purusha which as a deputy of that Self participates in the evolving manifestation. When the individual lives in his soul or the psychic being, he not only realises through it his own real individuality, his Self, but through that Self he becomes one with the Cosmic Self and Consciousness. Then his subliminal mind communes with the universal knowledge of the Cosmic Mind, his subliminal life mingles with the universal force of the Cosmic Life, and his subliminal body is fused with the universal force-formation of the Cosmic Matter. The subliminal soul dallies in harmony with the Cosmic Soul of the world and takes into itself and transcends all the myriad multiplicity of the universe. The contradiction and opposition between the collectivity and the individual is resolved and cosmic oneness and sympathy become an inherent truth of being. The inner state of equanimity and freedom from the dualities enables him to take all life into himself while still retaining his spiritual individuality. And even when he embraces the world of suffering and pain and obscurity he is not affected by it, for he remains untouched by the Ignorance.

There is in man, besides the subliminal range of consciousness, the range

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 220. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of an enveloping consciousness called by Sri Aurobindo "the circumconscient" in which his hidden relations with the world are determined. It is only by becoming aware of this consciousness — often called the environmental consciousness — that the individual can freely communicate with the universal consciousness and control his interchange with the universal forces.

Beyond all these planes is the superconscient which is also a part of our total being. In it we are in possession of our supreme highest Reality which we variously term Oversoul, God or Brahman. It is on this plane that we become aware of our Jivatman too, who is eternally in total identity with the supreme Spirit or the Paramatman. "If the subliminal and subconscient may be compared to a sea which throws up the waves of our surface mental existence, the superconscience may be compared to an ether which constitutes, contains, overroofs, inhabits and determines the movements of the sea and its waves." [1]

It is the vast totality of these manifold ranges of our being that constitute our integral 'I', the spiritual individuality, and it is in the luminous possession of this divine personality that lies the immense importance of the individual. As long as man lives in the mere surface mental and egoistic consciousness and obstinately clings on to the false idea that all consciousness is only mental, he cannot lay a claim to being the highest evolved entity in God's creation, and as long as he is not that the Divine Purpose of changing our present ignorant life into a Truth-Conscious Life Divine will ever remain a distant fantastical utopia or, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, a "noble chimera".

SPEECH BY SACHCHIDANANDA MOHANTY

The spectre of a nuclear Armageddon may have made a global war infructuous but it has not made strife obsolete. Beneath a façade of peace, a covert war goes on: a war of labels, banners and slogans. Gone is the day of courage, valour, chivalry and magnanimity. Instead, cunning, deception, hypocrisy — these are the sacred idols of the modern man! Lofty and noble ideals are constantly on his lips but "passion and evil/Feign auguster names and mimic the gait of the deathless." [2]

Under the garb of a collective progress and efficiency, a monstrous State Idea, unprecedented in the entire human history, is sweeping like a whirlwind across the entire globe. None is spared from its fatal clasp, not even the very protagonists of liberty. We hear the clarion-call of a new dawn but are embittered and dismayed at the appalling spectacle of the *status quo*. Like a

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 561.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *Ilion* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 446.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

runaway horse, the world seems to be plunging headlong into a "No Man's Land where obscure mysticisms, materialistic, vitalistic or mixed, clash and battle for the mastery of human life." [1]

This must not be! For such an eventuality will clearly ring the death-knell of the arrival of a New Age in human evolution. The birth of a new order will then have to wait for a more propitious time in some distant future. It is even possible that the terrestrial evolution might bypass man and a greater race might arise that is nearer to the Divine. But this is not inevitable. Man himself might overcome the present *impasse* and, making himself fit for spiritual transformation, resume the curve of his higher evolution.

But what relationship is there, one may ask, between a spiritual transformation and the importance of the individual? Unity, concord, harmony, efficiency and, above all, communal happiness — are these not the characteristic attributes of a spiritual life? And how can these best be attained if not by subduing the insatiable hunger of the individual human ego to a higher and worthier ideal of promoting the collective good, the collective well-being and the collective progress?

As an answer to this, Sri Aurobindo would reply that, despite its apparent soundness, the contention is shaky because its basic postulates are false; its very standing-ground is on shifting sands. For such an argument rests upon two fundamental assumptions. First of all, that the individual human nature is irremediably egoistic and self-seeking and, secondly, that the collective will and reason are reducible to a uniform mechanical formula of social life. In reality, however, an expansive and protean life can never fit into a rational strait-jacket. Such attempts have always been a *trompe-l'oeil*, mere intellectual moonshine.

Sri Aurobindo maintains that it will be incorrect to attribute a mark of permanence to something which is transitory. The individual ego does appear as perverse and intractable at the initial stage of the evolutionary ascent; nevertheless it was an important stage, for it brought the amorphous individual being a coherence and a stability in the universal flux. But in the future evolution it has to be dissolved and replaced by the spiritual individual. "Ego was the helper, ego is the bar."[2]

According to Sri Aurobindo, just as the individual is a reality, so also is there a truth of the aggregate. On the surface they may have conflicting interests, but deep down there is a basic underlying unity. The individual's plane of action is the society not only because he is gregarious by nature, as habitually believed, but also because his growth and development depends on a constant commingling and interchange with his fellowmen. Man is a

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 194.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 377.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

growing soul placed upon the earth to blossom his divine seeds together with his brethren with whom he is in a secret alliance.

When the implications of this integral view of the relationship of the individual and the group are fully realised, it becomes easy to understand why Sri Aurobindo is the greatest champion of the freedom of the individual even while affirming his solidarity with the collective group. For evolution is a journey in the aeonian travail, winding spirally towards the eternal summits. And, as in a march, there are the spirited harbingers, eager to court danger, and there are the flagging sluggards. When we speak of the Age of Pericles or the Age of Augustus, we do so not for a chronological convenience alone, we express a profound truth. What distinguishes an era is not its material prosperity but its great luminaries, the galaxy of its inspiring souls. Thinking of the Renaissance in India or of Elizabethan England, it is difficult to ignore the stupendous breakthroughs made by the great personalities of these periods — the physical no less than the psychological — resulting in the upliftment of the masses. Notice the meteoric advent of Sri Aurobindo on the national scene and how almost overnight he made lions out of docile sheep. Or take the example of Galileo or Copernicus but for whom planetary travels would have remained in the poet's imagination and the dreamer's fancy. Indeed it is fascinating to see that there is no branch of human knowledge in which we are not indebted to such a host of olympians, of which history obsessed with violence and turmoil has recorded but an infinitesimal fraction. As Sri Aurobindo said: "Man's greatness is not in what he is, but what he makes possible."[1]

On the other hand, we see that the mass is always ignorant, clinging to the lower ranges of life. It is preoccupied with the satisfaction of average wants and petty squabbles. It has no time or inclination for higher pursuits and culture. With its mind "shut up in the brilliant shell of the past" it is conformist *par excellence*. It feels secure and complacent in the comforting and familiar present and is reluctant to step across the threshold of the unknown. Fiercely dogmatic and obscurantist, progress it views with suspicion and not seldom with hostility. With the ferocity of the mob and the blind fanaticism of the bigot, it has burnt a Giordano Bruno at the stake, poisoned a Socrates, crucified a Christ. As if by such an inhuman persecution and derision, the resolute and indomitable spirit of the progressive individual could be thwarted! Thus strove the heralds of Light leaving their footprints' track as a "pathway towards immortality". As Sri Aurobindo has exquisitely portrayed in *Savitri*:

> "This world is in love with its own ignorance,
> Its darkness turns away from the saviour light,

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 9.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

It gives the cross in payment for the crown....
Hard is the world-redeemer's heavy task;
The world itself becomes his adversary,
His enemies are the beings he came to save....
He carries the cross on which man's soul is nailed;...
He has signed salvation's testament with his blood:...
His escort is the curses of the crowd;
Insult and jeer are his right's acknowledgment;...
His march is a battle and a pilgrimage.
Life's evil smites, he is striken with world's pain:
A million wounds gape in his secret heart.
He journeys sleepless through an unending night;...
The weeping of the centuries visits his eyes:
He wears the blood-glued fiery Centaur's shirt,
The poison of the world has stained his throat.
In the market-place of Matter's capital
Amidst the chafferings of the affair called life
He is tied to the stake of a perennial Fire,
He burns on an unseen original verge
That Matter may be turned to spirit stuff."[1]

Man needs freedom to breathe and elbow room to grow. And so we see that in history any society or nation which has been unduly oppressive and, however efficient in administration and outwardly symmetrical, has slaughtered liberty, had an awsome price to pay. Athens is the matrix of western civilisation because by permitting full freedom to its citizens it created a rich and many-sided culture, but where is Sparta today? Once basking in her strength and discipline, it lies now forgotten in the Hellenic wilderness. So did the Roman Empire perish by an excessive centralisation and regimentation that stunted its imperial growth and sterilised its culture. We observe this phenomenon everywhere else also and are led to the conclusion that progress is the brain-child of freedom and it is the illumined few that have always been the torch-bearers in this human cavalcade.

Looking from a deeper point of view, we notice that the individual is not limited to a meagre span of terrestrial life, though even there his importance is unquestionably paramount. He is a being that has countless lives behind him stretching endlessly into the past; lives stretch before him too, innumerable lives for a myriad revelation of the spirit's face.

When we consider the individual from this deeper spiritual point of view a more fundamental question arises. What is his relation with the cosmic Self and Nature and the transcendent Eternal? There is a view that since the

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book VI, Canto 2, pp. 448, 445, 446, 447.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

individual is a portion of the cosmos, he must necessarily be inferior to it though he does contain within him a divine Godhead. Such a position, though it may seem logically sound, is yet not wholly valid. For it is futile to impose our narrow, limited mental formulas on the deeper truths of the Spirit. The spiritual relationship between the individual and the cosmos is not to be judged in finite and temporal human terms of "more" or "less", "inferiority" or "superiority". As Sri Aurobindo says: "Every view that affirms the cosmos only and dismisses the individual as a by-product of the cosmic Energy, errs by laying too much emphasis on one apparent factual aspect of the world-action; it is true only of the natural individual and is not even the whole truth of that: for the natural individual, the nature-being is indeed a product of the universal Energy, but is at the same time a nature-personality of the soul, an expressive formation of the inner being and person, and this soul is not a perishable cell or a dissoluble portion of the cosmic Spirit, but has its original immortal reality in the Transcendence."[1]

Further, out of the tenebrous womb of the inconscience must evolve the manifested being. And it is only the individual soul that can execute this evolutionary ascent.

"Therefore man's importance in the world is that he gives to it that development of consciousness in which its transfiguration by a perfect self-discovery becomes possible. To fulfil God in life is man's manhood."[2]

If the aim of life were some quietistic Bliss, then all divine manifestation and liberated play become superfluous. But in reality each of us is an individuality of that one conscious Being and set apart for an infinite experience. To lament over the present imperfections and *lacunae* serves little. Instead let us join our voices with the poet —

> "The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star
> Hath had elsewhere it setting ...
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home."[3]

Or, better still, as Sri Aurobindo says, in a more inspiring melody —

> "Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor.
> Flake of the world-fire, spark of Divinity,
> Lift up thy mind and thy heart into glory.
> Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre.

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 661. [2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 36.
[3] Wordsworth, "*Ode on Intimations of Immortality*".

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

One, universal, ensphering creation,
Wheeling no more with inconscient Nature,
Feel thyself God-born, know thyself deathless.
Timeless return to thy immortal existence."[1]

Let our prayer be an ardent aspiration for "more light and more consciousness". Let our soul be constantly athirst for knowledge, our body for being a perfect receptacle for the Divine Epiphany. Let our entire being be saturated with the inexhaustible fount of Ananda, for indeed, as Sri Aurobindo says: "The greatness of the individuals is the greatness of the eternal Energy within."[2]

READINGS FROM SRĪ AUROBINDO

The Human Enigma

A deep enigma is the soul of man.
His conscious life obeys the Inconscient's rule,
His need of joy is learned in sorrow's school;
His heart is a chaos and an empyrean.
His subtle ignorance borrows Wisdom's plan;
His mind is the Infinite's sharp and narrow tool.
He wades through mud to reach the Wonderful,
And does what Matter must or Spirit can.

All powers in his living's soil take root
Hoping to grow and dominate the earth.
This little creature mind that would be great
Is Nature's fool and Godhead's struggling birth,
A demigod and a demon and a brute,
The slave and the creator of his fate.

(*Collected Poems*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 5, p. 148.)

*
**

Man, the Thinking Animal

A trifling unit in a boundless plan
Amidst the enormous insignificance

[1] "Soul in the Ignorance", *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 570.
[2] *The Greatness of the Individual* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 3), p. 356.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Of the unpeopled cosmos' fire-whirl dance,
Earth, as by accident, engendered man:

A creature of his own grey ignorance,
A mind half-shadow and half-gleam, a breath
That wrestles, captive in a world of death,
To live some lame brief years. Yet his advance,

Attempt of a divinity within,
A consciousness in the inconscient Night,
To realise its own supernal Light
Confronts the ruthless forces of the Unseen.

Aspiring to godhead from insensible clay
He travels slow-footed towards the eternal day.

(*Collected Poems*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 5, p. 163.)

***

"Man's greatness is not in what he is, but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed place and secret workshop of a living labour in which supermanhood is being made ready by a divine Craftsman. But he is admitted too to a yet greater greatness and it is this that, allowed to be unlike the lower creation, he is partly an artisan of this divine change; his conscious assent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him. His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental creator.

"If earth calls and the Supreme answers, the hour can be even now for that immense and glorious transformation."

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 9.)

The Mother's remark on the above quotation:

"Your quotation from Sri Aurobindo is magnificent."

13.3.1963

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

PART TWO

Annual Conferences

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

6 September 1964

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THE SECOND ADVENT OF SRI AUROBINDO

SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The spiritual evolution of earth is a progressive manifestation of the Divine Light in the darkness of inconscient Matter. Because this manifestation is progressive, the full splendour of the supreme Divine Light can only come at the summit of the evolutionary ascension. Till then the emerging Light has continuously to fight against the resisting darkness. It is for this reason that the spiritual evolution on earth has the appearance of a prolonged battle through many vicissitudes between the forces of Light and the powers of Darkness with the final victory of Light achieved only at the end.

In this long continuing battle there are also periods of crisis when the issue between the forces of Light and the powers of Darkness becomes so uncertain that only a direct intervention of the Divine can turn the balance on the side of the forces of Light and prevent the earth from being engulfed by the powers of Darkness. These are the periods of the Divine Incarnations on earth who come in a succession to sustain the progressive march of humanity towards the supreme Light.

Several such Incarnations have come on earth in the past, but since each one of them came to enable the progressive evolution to take only one more step forward, none of them have brought the perfect splendour of Light on earth. Each of them won a victory over the powers of Darkness but it was only a partial and inconclusive victory. The complete and decisive conquest still remains to be achieved. As Sri Aurobindo says:

"The universe is certainly or has been up to now in appearance a rough and wasteful game with the dice of chance loaded in favour of the Powers of darkness, the Lords of obscurity, falsehood, death and suffering. But we have to take it as it is and find out — if we reject the way out of the old sages — the way to conquer." [1]

The central reason why all the Incarnations or Avatars of the past failed to achieve the complete conquest over the opposing forces was that they brought on earth only a higher Light and Love but not a greater Power than that of those forces. And it is because of this that there is the persistent traditional belief of their second advent on earth equipped with a Power or Force that will enable them to achieve a lasting victory in their battle against

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 22), p. 396.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the forces of Darkness and Evil. As Sri Aurobindo has put it in one of his Aphorisms:

"When all is said, Love and Force together can save the world eventually, but not Love only or Force only. Therefore Christ had to look forward to a second advent and Mahommed's religion, where it is not stagnant, looks forward through the Imams to a Mehdi." [1]

The same idea is vividly expressed by Sri Aurobindo in another Aphorism:

"Christ came into the world to purify, not to fulfil. He himself foreknew the failure of his mission and the necessity of his return with the sword of God into a world that had rejected him." [2]

The "sword" in this Aphorism is only a symbol of the Spirit's Power that will enable Divine Love, when it manifests in the world, to slay the Evil that opposes it rather than be slain by it, as it has often happened in the past. Only that All-Powerful Love when it incarnates on earth can win the final victory in this agelong struggle. As the Mother has said:

"A Power greater than that of Evil can alone win the victory. It is not a crucified but a glorified body that will save the world." [3]

*

But even the greatest Avatars of the past did not possess that All-Victorious Power. The basic reason of this was that even the highest consciousness that they came to manifest on earth was of the Overmind plane. This Overmind plane, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the highest plane of the cosmic consciousness which is the direct creator of the present universe. But on the plane of the cosmic consciousness there is always a duality, for the integral truth of unity gets covered up there behind a veil. So on that plane it is impossible to find that all-effective imperative Power of the Spirit that is irresistible in its action. All the movements on the lower planes of cosmic consciousness below the Overmind, therefore, work themselves out by a constantly shifting balance of the conflicting forces in which there is no lasting victory on either side.

So even when the Overmind Truth and Love manifest on earth they can-

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 100.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 99.
[3] The Mother's New Year message on 1 January 1957.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

not achieve their decisive victory over the powers of Darkness and Evil which combat them on the lower cosmic planes. That decisive victory can only be won if a transcendental dynamic power from beyond the highest cosmic plane intervenes in the combat.

But none of the Avatars of the past had an access to that dynamic power of the transcendent Spirit. For them the Overmind plane was the summit of the spirit's ascension. The result was that even the Avatars who brought the highest Overmind Truth and Love on earth could not completely succeed in the work they came to accomplish. The Truth and Love they brought to save the world eventually got corrupted by Falsehood and Evil. They had not the "sword of God" which could slay these opposing powers in the world's arena. Often they themselves got slain at their hands.

*

Sri Aurobindo, however, refused to accept this defeat as final and inevitable. That was because in his own yogic endeavour he was able to ascend beyond the Overmind cosmic plane into the plane of the supramental Truth and command its irresistible transcendental Power. As a result of his personal realisation he was convinced that by dynamising the transcendental Power of the Supermind in the earth-consciousness a final and decisive victory over the powers of Falsehood and Evil and Suffering and Death could be won and the reign of Truth could be permanently established on earth. He was also convinced that the descent of that supramental Truth was the inevitable destined culmination of evolution on earth. He said:

"I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth evolution."[1]

To this work of supreme importance for the earth's destiny Sri Aurobindo dedicated himself entirely. With what an all-engrossing passion he made it his sole personal preoccupation can be judged by his own words:

"It is a question between the Divine and myself — whether it is the Divine Will or not, whether I am sent to bring that down or open the way for its descent or at least make it more possible or not. Let all men jeer at me if they will or all Hell fall upon me if it will for my presumption,—I go on till I conquer or perish. This is the spirit in which I seek the Supermind, no hunting for greatness for myself or others."[2]

*

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 143. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

But it may be asked: Why could Sri Aurobindo not bring down the Supermind on earth during his lifetime? Why did it become necessary for him to give up his body?

The answer to this is that Sri Aurobindo was not trying to realise the Supermind for himself but for the earth and humanity. He sought the realisation of the Supermind in himself only as a prerequisite, a necessary condition for its manifestation in the earth-consciousness and humanity. As he said:

"I have no intention of achieving the Supermind for myself only — I am not doing anything for myself, as I have no personal need of anything, neither of salvation (Moksha) nor supramentalisation. If I am seeking after supramentalisation, it is because it is a thing that has to be done for the earth-consciousness and if it is not done in myself, it cannot be done in others. My supramentalisation is only a key for opening the gates of the Supramental to the earth-consciousness; done for its own sake, it would be perfectly futile. But it does not follow either that if or when I become supramental, everybody will become supramental. Others can so become who are ready for it, when they are for it — though, of course, the achievement in myself will be to them a great help towards it."[1]

So for humanity to receive the Supermind, which Sri Aurobindo was bringing down, it was also necessary for humanity to make itself ready to receive it. And since the secure manifestation of the Supermind on earth required its establishment directly in the very roots of Matter, Sri Aurobindo had to bring down the Supermind into his own body so that the material substance of his body could serve as a transmitting channel of the supramental Force in earthly Matter. For that purpose he had to work out the supramental transformation of his own body. But as the Mother has said:

"A particular body cannot change unless there is some sort of a corresponding change in the surrounding bodies and in the surroundings generally also; for one lives and moves through mutual interchange in the midst of others. A collective change takes more time than individual change."[2]

So in order to work out the transformation of his own body it was also necessary to have a certain collaboration from the collective humanity. If that collaboration had been given Sri Aurobindo would have surely accomplished his mission in his lifetime and, establishing a direct conscious link between the Supermind and Matter, planted the Divine Life on earth.

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 144.
[2] "Towards February 29, 1960", *Mother India*, February 1960, pp. 5-6.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Unfortunately, however, that needed collaboration was not given by humanity. Sri Aurobindo therefore could not complete during his lifetime the work of transformation in his body and of the supramental manifestation on earth.

*

But his love for humanity and his concern for its fate were so profound that he did not give up his work because of its unreadiness. What humanity failed to do, he sought to accomplish by what the Mother has called "an act of supreme unselfishness". Let me read out to you in full the Mother's own explanation of Sri Aurobindo's decision to leave his body:

"Sri Aurobindo has given up his body as an act of supreme unselfishness, renouncing the realisation in his own body to hasten the hour of the collective realisation. Surely if the earth were more responsive, this would not have been necessary."[1] 12.4.1953

Mark the Mother's words: "to hasten the hour of the collective realisation." These words make it quite clear that Sri Aurobindo's leaving his earthly body was not a failure of his mission or a retreat from the formidable difficulties with which he was faced in accomplishing it, nor was it a succumbing to the inescapable end which overtakes all human life. Rather it was a deliberate act, a consciously willed event, self-chosen with a specific intention. It was in fact a strategic manœuvre, in the cosmic battle that he was fighting for earth and humanity, to hasten the hour of victory. His passing away thus marked an event of momentous significance for humanity's fate because it assured a swifter realisation of the promise of supramental realisation on earth. Hardly anyone has an adequate understanding of this event. No wonder the Mother had to say: "People do not know what a tremendous sacrifice Sri Aurobindo has made for the world."[2]

Sri Aurobindo's withdrawal from his body thus meant only a strategic shifting of the disposition of his field of action for a continuation of his work with an intenser concentration for a swifter victory. That victory in its initial but decisive stage was accomplished on 29 February 1956 when the supramental manifestation took place on a global scale in the earth's subtle atmosphere. After that date the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness have been incessantly working with an increasing intensity to remove the obstruction which humanity still offers to the inevitable unveiled manifestation of the full Supermind in the material consciousness and the physical life.

*

[1] *Sri Aurobindo Circle*, Ninth Number, 1953, p. 199.
[2] "Towards February 29, 1960", *Mother India*, February 1960, p. 3.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

When that obstruction is removed, the unveiled manifestation of the full Supermind will bring the second advent of Sri Aurobindo on earth. That manifestation will initiate a New Age in the life of humanity and Sri Aurobindo will preside over it by returning upon earth in a new divine body. The Mother has said: "Since the beginning of earth history, Sri Aurobindo has always presided over the great earthly transformations, under one form or another, one name or another."[1] He will therefore also come back to preside over the next earthly transformation that is soon going to happen.

Even now, from behind the surface scene of the material consciousness, he is preparing for that transformation, and when the conditions are ready he will arrive on earth in a new divine body. The way of directly manifesting that new body in the material conditions of the earth, without recourse to the usual sexual process, is now being worked out and when that way is laid open Sri Aurobindo will be the first to arrive on earth as the new Supramental Being in a divine body.

But before that can happen a direct link between the descending Supermind and the involved Supermind in Matter must be consciously established. Then alone can Supermind have its unveiled direct action in Matter and the new divine body can directly materialise in earthly conditions. At the present moment the central action of Sri Aurobindo is directed towards the establishment of that link.

The second advent of Sri Aurobindo is therefore a continuous process with a long preparation. Even though his final appearance in the divine body may seem like a sudden miracle, it has to be prepared stage by stage by a long working. Veil after veil has to be removed until the final veil is rent and the glorious body appears. All the veils up to the subtle physical plane have already been removed and Sri Aurobindo is now stationed on that plane in a permanent home and is working for the removal of the final veil before he arrives on earth in his new body.

That can only happen at the culmination of the process of the supramental manifestation. The Supermind in its manifestation on earth does not manifest its fullest power all at once but by gradual degrees. Initially it puts forth only a modified power of its full omnipotence. The supramental manifestation that took place on 29 February 1956 was only a beginning; it was a first modified power of the Supermind. But since then the manifestation of its greater potencies is continuously progressing in order to remove the last resistance that still blocks its way. That resistance can be ultimately vanquished only when the Supermind manifesting from above is directly linked with the Supermind awaking from below.

That direct link can be established only when the power of Ananda of

[1] *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the highest Supermind begins to act. That Supermental Ananda comes from a supreme divine Love which alone has the power to conquer entirely the resistance of Matter and make possible the manifestation of the divine body and fulfil the promise of divine life on earth. As Sri Aurobindo himself has said:

"That mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda... alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe."[1]

*

That supreme divine Ananda which is indispensable for the full supramental manifestation on earth is now no longer working from its secrecies but more and more directly intervening in the transformation of the physical consciousness and the material substance. The power of the vibrations of this Ananda is absolutely irresistible. It will utterly destroy all that tries to resist its transforming action in the world. As the Mother has recently said:

"The state of the consciousness of this ecstasy would be dangerous in the present condition of the world. Because that has reactions that are almost absolute — I see that this state of ecstasy has a for-mi-dable power. But I insist on the word formidable, in the sense that it is intolerant or intolerable — rather intolerable — for all that is not alike. It is the same thing or almost the same (not quite the same but almost) as the supreme divine Love; the vibration of this ecstasy or ravishment is just a small beginning of the vibration of the divine Love, and that is absolutely, yes there is no other word, intolerant in the sense that it does not admit the presence of anything that is contrary to it.

"Then that would have naturally frightful results for the ordinary consciousness. I see it quite well, because sometimes this power comes — this power comes and you have the impression that everything is going to burst. Because it can tolerate nothing but union, it can tolerate nothing but the response that accepts, nothing but what receives and accepts. And it is not an arbitrary will, it is of the *very fact* of its existence which is all-powerful, 'all-powerful' not in the sense in which all-powerful is understood, but a true all power. That is to say it exists entirely, totally, exclusively. It contains all, but what is contrary to its vibration is compelled to change, naturally, because nothing can disappear. And then this change that is immediate,

[1] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 36.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

brutal so to say, absolute, in the world as it is, is a catastrophe."[1]

After describing this action of the divine Ananda and Love, the Mother has softly added a personal remark of which everyone must take careful note at the present moment: "Because it was that, I said to myself: 'Why? I who am... at any moment I have to do this (*gesture upward*) and it is... There is nothing but the Lord, all is That — but in a way so absolute that all which is not That disappears! now then the proportion (*laughing*), there would be too many things that must disappear!' "[2]

*

It is the Mother's personal role to prepare the advent of the Lord on earth. In the past history of earth it was She who manifested all the Incarnations of the Lord. In the future also it is She who will manifest the Supramental Avatar.

At the present moment Her exclusive concentration is on the preparation for the second advent of Sri Aurobindo on earth. To make the way clear for Him She will rid the earth of all that resists His Will, eventually by the irresistible vibrations of the supreme Ananda and Love. She is for that alone and Her presence on earth is an absolute certitude that She will accomplish Her will. She will surely bring back Sri Aurobindo on earth in His divine body and establish His rule in the world. The New Age will be His Image. The New Life will be the rhythm of His Love.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW AGE

SPEECH BY VIJAY PODDAR

The advent of a New Age, according to Sri Aurobindo, demands the simultaneous satisfaction of two conditions: there must be first a few individuals who have seen the Truth, who have realised the Spirit, who have moulded their lives by its power and are capable of inspiring and leading the mass; and there must be a mass of men willing to transform themselves, ready to receive the light and to follow in their footsteps.

It was to provide a suitable atmosphere for those who want to be in the vanguard of humanity, for those whose only aspiration is the descent of the spirit in their lives that this Ashram was created. It was "meant to be the

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1963, pp. 67-8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

cradle of the new world"[1] for, as the Mother declares, "There should be somewhere upon earth a place that no nation could claim as its sole property, a place where all human beings of good will, sincere in their aspiration, could live freely as citizens of the world, obeying one single authority, that of the supreme Truth, a place of peace, concord, harmony, where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the causes of his sufferings and miseries, to surmount his weakness and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the care for progress would get precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the seeking for material pleasures and enjoyment." [2] And she adds, "That is exactly what we are seeking to do at the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo on a small scale, in proportion to our modest means. The achievement is indeed far from being perfect but it is progressive; little by little we advance towards our goal, which, we hope, one day we shall be able to hold before the world as a practical and effective means of coming out of the present chaos in order to be born into a more true, more harmonious new life." [3]

Our way shall be the way of self-perfection, a seeking after God and His manifestation upon earth. For any spiritual society that aspires to be divine in the true sense of the word must have for its basis the triple truth of all existence — "God, freedom, unity". But essentially these three are one. As Sri Aurobindo insists, "You cannot realise freedom and unity unless you realise God, you cannot possess freedom and unity unless you possess God, possess at once your highest self and the self of all creatures." [4] The Divine alone is the foundation of the spiritual society and we find that Sri Aurobindo Himself came down here to mould and to give shape to this Ashram, to reveal Himself and His Divine workings in its minutest details, to lay the seal of certitude on the advent of the New Age. But the victory is not complete until each individual realises his inner unity with the Lord who has descended upon earth, and installs within himself that Divine Presence. The Supreme must be the object of all our striving and endeavour. We must live in Him, act in Him, and radiate His power and light and love. Then only will the first condition for the creation of a new humanity be satisfied.

Once this foundation has been laid, the future society will grow towards perfection in complete freedom and unity. What we now consider as freedom is simply an unconscious slavery to the forces of Nature and the vital powers. But a greater consciousness will bring a greater life, a life free from limitations, weaknesses and obscurities. It will mean the liberation of the Purusha from the bonds of Prakriti, the freedom of the individual from the clutches of the ego, from the sense of division and imperfection.

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1964, p. 98.
[2] [3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1954, pp. 113-17.
[4] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 239.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

In the words of the Mother, "It is that freedom that I require of you: to be free from all attachment, all ignorance, all reaction, — free from everything except a total surrender to the Divine, for with this surrender comes the supreme spiritual freedom."[1] "The only way to be truly free, is to make your surrender to the Divine, total and without reserve. Then you will see that all that ties you, binds you, chains you loses its importance and falls off quite naturally."[2]

But even to arrive at this state the Divine does not impose himself. Therefore here in the Ashram the Mother gives us a complete freedom, a freedom even to err and to stumble. Only that growth is truly living and healthy which proceeds not by an external compulsion but by a flowering from within. Only that discipline is truly valuable which the individual imposes upon himself, that law worth following in which he finds his own divinity. Therefore here the means employed are not impositions of fixed rules and regulations, but the call of an ideal, the gradual influence of an atmosphere charged with the light that surrounds and bathes us, but most of all the silent, continuous and sublime transformation that the Mother is carrying out within us even though we may not know it.

This is the divine freedom towards which we are moving and with it shall come also harmony and mutuality based on a spiritual unity. In fact this spiritual freedom will not be a veil isolating us from the rest, for, as Sri Aurobindo observes, "He who sees God in all, will serve freely God in all with the service of love."[3] Like Buddha and Vivekananda the spiritualised man shall return from the heights to help and to succour the rest of humanity. He shall feel an inner oneness with all. For, in the words of the Mother, "This oneness is simply the Divine Presence.... The oneness exists... whether you know it or not, it exists, it exists in itself, independently of your consciousness of it. Therefore, whether you know it or not, whether you wish it or not, your being belongs to the Divine Unity. Only when you become conscious, you have the joy of the unity."[4]

It is in this Divine Presence that we have to establish ourselves, and by which we have to harmonise and unify the different parts of our being. We have to feel an inner identity with all existence by the perception of God in ourselves and God in the world. Finally, this spiritual life will admit within itself an infinite diversity, for it will be based on the inalienable unity of the spirit.

This then is the triple foundation of the future spiritual society, and the spiritual life will leave out nothing from its scope. If all is the Divine, each sincere endeavour, each manifestation can be a means of arriving at Him.

[1] [2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1958, p. 81.
[3] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 244.
[4] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1956, p. 57.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Therefore in our life here nothing is excluded. Everything is accepted, offered to the Supreme and made a means of our self-finding and self-conquest.

This is the goal that we put before us, but then many ask the question: "If your aim is exclusively spiritual, how is it that we find so many things here that are unspiritual, in fact things that one could never expect to find in an Ashram?" There are three reasons for this. First, we are in a stage of transition, and therefore there are bound to be parts in us that are not yet transformed. Secondly, says Sri Aurobindo, whenever there is such a concentrated effort to surpass oneself, the adverse powers also get concentrated and strive much more to block our upward endeavour, for their very *raison d'être* is to test our sincerity by prolonging the reign of darkness. And, finally, ours is an Integral Yoga which must be able to surmount all obstacles. Therefore, the Mother points out, "Although you knew nothing of it, each one of you represents one of the difficulties that have to be surmounted for the transformation. That creates very many difficulties.... There will be all the frictions, contacts, reactions, all that comes from outside, as tests, exactly on your weak point, the most sensitive spot. Here you will hear just the word, the phrase, that you would not like to hear, and people will make just the gesture that would offend you.... And it is precisely that which happens, and happens more and more, because you do not do your yoga for yourself alone, you do the yoga for everybody, without knowing it, automatically."[1]

This is the cause of all that appears as unspiritual in the Ashram and all that we must conquer. This would be an impossible task if left to our own effort, but we have also the unique opportunity that the Divine Mother has come down in our midst, in her infinite Love, to bear our sorrows, to transmute our pain into delight, "our failure into success", and death into immortality. As Sri Aurobindo insists, "To be a Yogi, a Sannyasi, a Tapaswi is not the object here. The object is transformation, and the transformation can only be done by a force infinitely greater than your own; it can only be done by being truly like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother."[2] All that we have to do is to offer ourselves to her completely and joyfully; this complete surrender is the key that opens all the gates, for then the Divine gives Himself to the sadhak. In the words of the Mother: "The more you give yourself to the Divine, the more you have the experience that the Divine is giving Himself to you.... It is as if you carried Him within yourself, as if the Divine was always with you; you walk, He walks with you, you sleep, He sleeps with you, you eat, He eats with you, you think, He thinks with you, you love, He is the love which you have. But for that one must give oneself entirely, absolutely, exclusively, refusing nothing, keeping nothing for one-

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1960, pp. 63,65.
[2] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 129.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

self, holding nothing back nor throwing away anything."[1] Once this self-offering is completed it is the Mother who shall take up the burden of our sadhana, who shall provide the force that changes "difficulties into opportunities and weakness into unfaltering strength", so that our Yoga shall become a sunlit path revealing at each step her guiding hand and her smiling face. Then we can advance with the certitude expressed in the message of Sri Aurobindo:

"The Light grows always.

"As for the shadow it is only a shadow and will disappear in the growing Light."[2]

LIFE IN THE NEW AGE

SPEECH BY DEBRANJAN CHATTERJI

We stand today at the cross-roads of life, where we must choose either the call of the flesh, or the smoky flame of the mind, or the call of the Spirit — the fulfilment of God in life. For those who feel their souls are yoked to the aspiration for God, Light and Freedom, who, like a young Upanishadic Rishi, cry out in divine dissatisfaction, "What shall I do with that which will not give me immortality?", our Master and the Mother have a message.

In the Gita Sri Krishna said, "Among thousands of men one here and there strives after perfection, and of those who strive and attain to perfection one here and there knows Me in all the principles of my existence."[3] We have been given here this unique privilege to attain to the integral knowledge of the Divine. And since we believe that the Divine is all-embracing and total, we reject the view of those who hold that life in this world is forever doomed to be in ignorance, pain and suffering, that any idea of transfiguring it into its positive divine aspects of bliss, freedom and Immortality is merely "an inspiring dream of the impossible". We believe that "life too is a power of the divine", that there is a Divine Presence veiled behind our imperfect nature that shapes our life to an ever-increasing perfection. And it is our spiritual destiny that we should be able to find and fulfil in life the will of this hidden Presence — the will of the Supreme Mother.

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1955, p. 85.

[2] Message distributed on 15 August 1957.

[3] *Gita*, Ch. VII, Verse 3. Translation from *The Message of the Gita* (1946), edited by Anilbaran Roy, p. 109.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The goal we have set before us is indeed great and difficult. For life always assumes adamantine obstinacy when pressed to cede its present forms of habits and desires. It is not without sufficient reasons that Vivekananda compared human nature to a dog's tail. For, whatever attempt we make to straighten it, "by force of ethics, religion, reason or any other redemptive effort, it returns in the end always to the crooked curl of Nature".[1]

And, yet there is a remedy; else the world "would be a contradiction of the truth of things, a nightmare, an impossible falsehood". The remedy has been offered to us by our Master, and we have been called upon by his divine compassion to follow his guidance. In the present lecture our endeavour will be to study life in the vision of our Master and the solution he has offered for its salvation.

Human life, such as we normally experience, is of a double nature. There are, on the one side, the demands of the vital and the physical being, and, on the other, the demands of the mind. These two distinct selves within us are constantly at odds with each other. The will in the vital and the physical self seeks expansion, enjoyment and persistence of certain forms of already established pleasures. Our normal happiness is greatly conditioned by their satisfactions. This part of our being is half animal in its characteristics. But man is not merely an animal; he is a Manomaya Purusha, "the soul in the mind".

The will in the mind, on the other side, struggles to elevate life from its vital and physical clingings by laws of moral conduct. It also seeks enjoyment and possession, but enjoyment and possession of things not vital and physical but intellectual, ethical and aesthetic, and to grow not so much in outward life as in "the true, the good and the beautiful". Thus, to realise in life the mind's vision of right living is the ruling passion of man. But this is precisely what he has failed to achieve. For he has not yet succeeded in organising his life in the image of the true, the beautiful and the good. All that he has been able to do so far is to effect a certain compromise between the demands of the vital and the mind by unstable moral standards. But a compromise merely shelves the problem, it does not solve it. We see that life always escapes mind's rigid formulas of right living. And when mind fails to dominate life with its abstract ideals it withdraws in disgust into the heights of mental aloofness. The result is a complete failure of the vital force which in the long run brings decay in the life of the society and nation, arrests the progress of the external life which bogs down into the swamp of inertia. Or, life itself takes its revenge by making reason the executor of its own desires. Mind, now a captive of life-force, applies itself to the fulfilment of the vital and the physical demands. The last two great World Wars mark the lethal consequences of the unregenerated vital force asserting its will to

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 161.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

possess the world and enjoy its domination, breaking down all lofty mental ideals of freedom and fraternity.

Thus, these two elements in us, life and mind, live in a continual war "like an ill-assorted wife and husband", as our Master puts it half-humourously, "always at odds and yet half in love with or at least necessary to each other, unable to beat out a harmony, yet condemned to be joined in an unhappy leash until death separates them."[1] This double nature of man is the cause of much of his dissatisfaction, disillusionment and pessimism that we encounter today.

The root cause of our failure to give life a nobler form is not that life is essentially a negation of the good, the true and the beautiful but that our mind is incapable of lifting upward the will in life from its physical and vital urges to its spiritual status. The vital in the ignorance, as Sri Aurobindo describes it, is a "mixed flux of good and evil, joy and sorrow, light and darkness, heady rapture and bitter torture. It loves these things and would have more and more of them or, even when it suffers and cries out against them, can accept or joy in nothing else."[2] As we move on the way to self-perfection we become acutely aware of the obstinate persistency of this mighty opponent. All labour to lift life into the image of the divine perfection seems to end in a spiritual fiasco; a flight, a withdrawal into the happy heavens remains the only wisdom. For two thousand years since Buddha India has lived under the "shadow of the great Refusal". As Sri Aurobindo observes, "All voices are joined in one great consensus that not in this world of the dualities can there be our kingdom of heaven, but beyond.... And through many centuries a great army of shining witnesses, saints and teachers, names sacred to Indian memory and dominant in Indian imagination, have borne always the same witness and swelled always the same lofty and distant appeal, — renunciation the sole path of knowledge, acceptance of physical life the act of the ignorant, cessation from birth the right use of human birth, the call of the Spirit, the recoil from Matter."[3]

But negation is not our ideal, we seek a larger affirmation. The difficulties that we confront in yoga in dealing with life arise because the ego has created a false desire-soul for its work in the ignorance. This soul of desire seeks its egoistic satisfaction of growth, possession and enjoyment. Since it is egoistic in its root, there is always a conflict, clash and struggle between our desires and needs and those of others. But our instincts for growth, possession and enjoyment are not evil in their essence. The transmuted life-force will also, says Sri Aurobindo, seek for "growth, but a growth of the Spirit in Nature, affirming and developing itself in mind, life and body; possession, but

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 222.
[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 161.
[3] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 23.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

a possession by the Divine of the Divine in all things, and not of things for their own sake by the desire of the ego; enjoyment, but an enjoyment of the divine Ananda in the universe; battle and conquest and empire in the shape of a victorious conflict with the Powers of Darkness, an entire spiritual self-rule and mastery over inward and outward Nature, a conquest by Knowledge, Love and Divine Will over the domains of the Ignorance."[1]

To attain to such a revolutionary state of our being we must fulfil three conditions: abolition of desire, subjection of the impulses of the life-force and the mind to the guidance of the psychic being and, lastly, replacement of the ego by the true spiritual person.

Desire, according to our Master, is our "fallen aspiration" which in its essence seeks to enjoy the divine in all things. It is by spiritual discipline that we can get back to the right kind of enjoyment. To form a true relation with all things in the world we must cede our desires. Equality and absence of ego are the infallible signs of desirelessness. True equality, according to Sri Aurobindo, means to remain "unmoved by joy and sorrow, the pleasant and the unpleasant, success or failure, to look with an equal eye on high and low, friend and enemy, the virtuous and the sinner, to see in all beings the manifold manifestation of the One and in all things the multitudinous play or the slow masked evolution of the embodied spirit."[2] Thus when desire and ego are slain and a calm equal wideness is established, the true vital being, Pranamaya Purusha, "comes out from the veil and reveals its own calm, intense and potent presence".[3] A new life begins to dawn upon us; we are no more a troubled and harassed creature, making a feverish effort to snatch from life as much pleasure as possible; instead we dwell in peace, calm strength and bliss.

After the vital is thus purified the psychic being comes forward as our progressive guide on the way of the Spirit. It always indicates the right method, the right step that lead to a complete spiritual fulfilment. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Its action is like a search-light showing up all that has to be changed in the nature."[4] "But the most intimate character of the psychic," according to Sri Aurobindo, "is its pressure towards the Divine through a sacred love, joy and oneness. It is the divine Love that it seeks most, it is the love of the Divine that is its spur, its goal."[5] Therefore a contact with the psychic being is the one indispensable requirement in the yoga of self-perfection.

This is, indeed, a new birth in which a sacrifice of all our works with a deep love and joy to the innermost Divine becomes the sole purpose of living. The veiled Mother begins to reveal herself within us, her dynamic presence

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 165.
[2] [3] *Ibid.*, p. 167.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 145. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

takes possession of our life, mind and body; breaking the resistance of nature she opens the flood-gates of her transporting love.

"This cannot be a smooth and even process", cautions our Master, "alternations there are of day and night, illumination and darkness,... heights of hope and abysses of despair, the clasp of the Beloved and the anguish of its absence, the overwhelming invasion, the compelling deceit, the fierce opposition, the disabling mockery of hostile Powers or the help and comfort and communion of the gods and the Divine Messengers."[1] And yet our victory is inevitable for "the supreme Mother-Force" in whom we have taken refuge is our eternal companion. Hear her appeal to her children in the dark: "Do not give up the enemy (the adverse forces) — resist — I am with you for the fight and *we must conquer*."[2] Listen also to the assuring voice of our Master : "If thy heart is troubled within thee, if for long seasons thou makest no progress, if thy strength faint and repine, remember always the eternal word of our Lover and Master, 'I will free thee from all sin and evil; do not grieve.' "[3]

This faith in the Mother and our Master is the only shield against the assaults of adverse forces. For, truly, we cannot abrogate the difficulties; they are inevitable features in our spiritual journey. But have we not been told by our Master: "It is the difficult that has always been accomplished and the conquest of difficulties makes up all that is valuable in the earth's history."[4]

Our struggle to achieve a higher life is largely owing to our complex nature. For we are not made of a single piece — a pure mental or vital-physical or a pure spiritual being. There are many planes and parts of our being, each one seeking its own perfection. Thus to effect a transformation of life we must come in contact with all these "hidden stretches" of our being and cleanse all that is obscure, obstinate and impure from every part of our nature. For as long as any portion within us belongs to ignorance there is always a possibility of a fall even from our highest spiritual flight. For a better understanding of this phenomenon of our progress, I quote here some portions of a letter of Sri Aurobindo, written on June 26, 1916: "The difficulties that you find in the spiritual progress are common to us all. In this yoga, the progress is always attended with these relapses into the ordinary mentality until the whole being is so remoulded that it can no longer be affected either by any downward tendency in our own nature or by the impressions from the discordant world outside or even by the mental state of those associated with us most closely in the yoga.... For myself I have had to come back so often from

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 20), p. 169.
[2] *White Roses* (1973), p. 3.
[3] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), pp. 112-13.
[4] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 578.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

things that seemed to have been securely gained that it is only relatively that I can say of any part of my yoga, 'It is done'. Still I have found that when I recover from one of these recoils, it is always with a new spiritual gain which might have been neglected or missed if I had remained securely in my former state of partial satisfaction."[1]

Such a complete transfiguration of our nature cannot be accomplished by our personal effort. It is the force of the Mother that alone can bring about our victory and "diminish the difficulty and obviate the danger".

As we grow more and more into self-consciousness with her force guiding our aspiration, our fields of knowledge and existence begin to expand. The entire physical world appears to us as a translation of the universal life-force. We can detect the sources of our feelings, emotions, sensations, passions and are able to accept or reject consciously the vital forces that press upon us. Thus we can deal with our physical incapacity, disease, fatigue by means of the influx of the pranic currents and support the physical energies.

All these and many more new experiences await us when the pure vital being comes to the forefront. But for a complete regeneration of the vital we must rise to the supramental plane. For, it is in the Supermind alone that all conflicting parts of our personality, all opposites that afflict us here, are raised to their original unity and harmony. Our union with the Supreme Mother becomes complete and all-embracing.

This is the message, the salvation our Master has offered to all of us who long to rise towards a higher and wider life.

SRI AUROBINDO, THE POET OF THE NEW AGE

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The concept of the poetry of the future has no clear definition to the modern mind: it is something vague or intangible, perhaps something impossible to realise. It has no vision or direct perception of that great new truth of poetic utterance which cannot be made manifest by artificial effort but needs the calling down of a higher and larger force of inspiration, a wider flood of poetic impulse. In reality, the poetry of the future embodies not only something definite that evolves, but something that is a truth of the spirit which reveals itself more and more in words and poetic speech. It is a vision. It is a manifestation of the deepest spiritual voice, the highest experience of Man and

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), pp. 425-26.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Nature and God. Thus the poet of the future would not be a juggler of words or of fancy phrases, who aims to give a start or a shock, but must be a seer, who sees the inner centre of events, things, their causes, their development, the vast course of the world-drama; a poet who is conscious of the words and their full psychological import and function, and capable of exploiting to the full their tonal qualities that echo the deeper, higher and wider spiritual vibrations; and lastly a yogi who has seen and experienced all facets of cosmic and individual life, soul and mind. Also he must be conscious of the national trend of the language and its evolution and also conscious of its shortcomings and advantages, together with his own capacity, his position in the line and tradition of the poets. To sum up, the poetry of the future must solve "a problem new to the art of poetic speech, an utterance of the deepest soul of man and of the universal spirit in things, not only with another and a more complete vision, but in the very inmost language of the self-experience of the soul and the sight of the spiritual mind."[1]

If these are our tenets, we shall find no poet fulfilling the conditions except at rare elevated moments. These elevated moments are wonders and high-water marks, but cannot be called the native conditions of the new age of poetry. They reveal the promise, but not the fulfilment in an actuality. At the same time, the heightening, deepening and broadening of the poetic expression and quality from Shakespeare to Tagore shows the coming of a new subjective age of poetry. We see the intensification of vision, of creative impulse, with occasional lapses, and hard outer objectivity yielding place to the subjective, life being replaced by the reason and reason in its turn being replaced by an intuitional outburst, first in life, then in mind, preparing the soul to be expressed in transparent clarity. The present shows a blind quest to break through the barriers of phenomenal existence into dream-states, or the dark or twilit worlds of half-truths and semblances. The trend is towards the occult; but the result is often bizarre, a meaningless chaos which is both incomprehensible and nonsensical. We cannot trace the thought-content, nor follow the symbolic ideation. There has been a series of revolts against the established tradition, which seem to come not for any greater creativity but only for the fun of breaking the tradition, or to give a shock, or even if the impulse for a larger creation is there, it is a veiled attempt, an unconscious quest. Such revolts that have occurred several times since the Victorian era, did not, however, fulfil the claim or further the cause of poetic growth. Hopkins and Eliot and others have given us an intellectual mode, symbols, ugly realism and have clarified their new standpoints but in themselves their own creations have been no guiding posts or a true revelatory poetry. Merely experimenting with new forms or quaint abstractions does not in itself start a new age. A deeper change is needed without lessening the

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 9), p. 283.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

quality, the tone, the creative intensity, beauty and splendour that are essential to poetry. Sri Aurobindo comes as the culmination of this hectic age, not by a blind revolt against any established authority, but by transcendence of the limitations and perversions of the materialistic era. He has also defined for us the evolutionary nature of poetry and has shown how the poetry of tomorrow is an inevitable process. He has analysed the nature of poetry, the spirit of form and substance, the source of poetic truth, the rhythm, the vision and the delight and beauty of poetic creation. But he is no mere arm-chair critic, for he himself has written and made manifest what he has defined earlier as the essence of poetics and poetic creation.

There is another factor: the factor of time. So long the spirit was veiled behind the shroud of materiality, vitality or mental formation. Certain preparations were necessary before it could emerge as the guiding principle. The Elizabethan age was capable of manifesting the vital exuberance, the vital intuition and the splendid fling of the life-force. The Miltonic era saw the curbing of this exuberance by the rational spirit. The Romantic age saw the emergence of the mental intuition and by its advent prepared for the age of the Spirit. For Reason by now had exhausted its capacity to give us something new and the poetical revolts were the outer signs of this exhaustion of the spirit of Reason. The present age is an age of passing values, of marking time when the emergence of the Spirit is imminent and man is not awakened enough or fully prepared to be able to answer to its full impetus. Sri Aurobindo here comes as the pioneer of a new age and makes possible the full descent of the Spirit in poetry. He is not an iconoclast, or a builder on the ruins of the past; rather he is a new creator who has taken a new leap into the kingdom of the Spirit. But he is not an eclectic; his synthesis surpasses the crude assembling of outer elements and takes into account all that was true of the past, ingathering all that could live or could grow and evolve. He does not wholly discard old forms or modes. He does not deliberately cast off old values. But these become reborn, renewed by his touch. At the same time he has thrown overboard the Victorian falsities, the Romantic exaggerations, the violences of the Elizabethans and the uglinesses of contemporary poetry. What is true lives in his consciousness and his vision. He refuses to descend to the gross objective plane; rather all things appear in a new light in his vision and his all-embracing consciousness.

The truth in Sri Aurobindo's poetry is not the fancy of the ideal dreamer nor the rational truth of the philosopher, nor the relative or experimental truth of the scientist; it is the Truth of the Eternal, the Creatrix of beauty, inspiration and delight. It is not limited by the factors of circumstances or conditioned by the divisions of human ignorance. From this height all is plenitude, harmony and although having many facets, all is a supreme unity. Here is a vision of supreme unity as revealed in *Savitri*:

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"She was Time and the dreams of God in Time;
She was Space and the wideness of his days.
From this she rose where Time and Space were not;
The superconscient was her native air,
Infinity was her movement's natural space;
Eternity looked out from her on Time."[1]

Sri Aurobindo does not sidetrack or attempt to veil the truth. The Sun of the Spirit's Truth shines out clear in him. There is a vastness in his vision, a height in his experience, a depth in his sense of identity:

"In the realms of the immortal Supermind
Truth who hides here her head in mystery,
Her riddle deemed by reason impossible
In the stark structure of material form,
Unenigmaed lives, unmasked her face and there
Is Nature and the common law of things."[2]

He informs the soul with the truth, the truth of all existence, the beauty of creation, the delight to be and the inspiration that is the guide of man's spiritual ascent. Here is no ethical aim; no mental attempt at a religious teaching or an abstraction that only confounds but never reveals. He does not use this great light for any lesser motives of creating a poem describing a passing event. On the contrary, he asks this Sun to illumine his path in the manifestation of a divine drama of God's incarnation. A greatest light is used for a greatest aim.

Not only Truth, but Life is also the aim of Sri Aurobindo's poetic creation. The life of the senses of Shakespeare, the life of the realist, the life of the philosopher or the scientist are in reality the shadows of this great source. Hence, instead of going to the lesser point, he goes to the source, the rhythmic voice of life, which is not partial or one-sided, but which is the self of things; as here:

"A wide wave of movement stirred all the dim globe in each glad and dreaming fold;
Life was cast into grandeur, ocean hands took the wheels of Time."[3]

Or,

"Rose of God, smitten purple with the incarnate divine Desire,

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book VII, Canto VII, p. 557.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 661-62.
[3] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 595.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Rose of Life, crowded with petals, colour's lyre!
Transform the body of the mortal like a sweet and magical rhyme;
Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood, make deathless the children
of Time."[1]

He is conscious of the force, the ecstasy, the thrill of creative beauty; it moves like vast torrents, luminous like the divine Desire. This Life is at the root of his poems. For in spite of his rising to great ethereal heights, he never loses touch with life as the centre of his poetical creation. Not the life of passions or revolts, or harsh disfiguring desires, but life that is the "Mystic Miracle, daughter of Delight" and whose spans are the radius of eternity. Thus when he speaks of Nature, we feel a larger breath behind. Even when describing outer Nature, he does not lose contact with this everlasting reality; as here:

"A grandiose silence wrapped the regal day.
The months had fed the passion of the sun
And now his burning breath assailed the soil.
The tiger heats prowled through the fainting earth;
All was licked up as by a lolling tongue.
The spring winds failed; the sky was set like bronze."[2]

He stands behind Nature, at the same time he is one with its breath. This dual movement of aloofness and identification gives the needed vision and overwhelming reality. He sees the ways of Nature not as a blind element, but as a god, for he can say:

"I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine.
Time is my drama or my pageant dream."[3]

Life itself is not complete without the soul, the soul of delight that sees, feels and hears all things as the waves of beauty, the waves of utter sweetness. Life gives power, but soul lends a deeper secrecy of joy, of love, of inner essence that upholds all existence. Sri Aurobindo, as the poet of the future, does not base his poetical creation on life or mind or the senses although all have a place in his creation. The soul alone has access to the core of all human sentiments, all values, all living essences of nature and life, of reason and moods, of flux and status. It is not like the mind an impartial gazer or like a violent wave of changing moods or dreams; rather it can enter into the very centre of things and, identified with the stress and surge, taste the Rasa

[1] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 584.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book IV, Canto IV, pp. 385-86
[3] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 161.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of movement and creation. But this identification is not a losing of its essential character of inner poise. In whatever it touches, it discovers sweetness, intensity, delight and beauty; in all it finds the heavenly manna of divine enjoyment — be it in creation or in repose, be it in power or in love, be it in silence or in the titanic whirl of forces. All wear different masks of the one imperishable Ananda. The soul alone has the key to plenitude and harmony. Sri Aurobindo's creation, having the soul as the base of poetry, is always beautiful, and radiates undiminished felicity. Here is a sweep:

> "Heard the symphonies old of the ocean recalling the ages
> Lost and dead from its marches salt and unharvested furrows,
> Felt in the pregnant hour the unborn hearts of the future."[1]

We hear the soul revel in the grandeur and roll of the Hellenic epic. Or take:

> "Nothing is hid from my burning heart;
> My mind is shoreless and still;
> My song is rapture's mystic art,
> My flight immortal will."[2]

In this we witness the soul becoming the luminous instrument of the Divine. Mark the note of felicity running through the lines like a hidden stream. For in verity the soul is the instrument of the Divine, the Invisible Guide, it is the tool of the imperishable light. It was:

> "Infinite, coeval with the mind of God,
> It bore within itself a seed, a flame,
> A seed from which the Eternal is new-born,
> A flame that cancels death in mortal things."[3]

And this soul went out to create not by mind or life or sense or outer physical impetus, but by the inner need of creation. But in the process it was aided and illumined by the Sun of Truth.

Sri Aurobindo reveals the emergence of the Spirit in all things in his poetry. This is the fundamental vision. We see in other poets elements like destiny, fatalism, materialism or poetic justice that run like a subtle undertone in their work. But Sri Aurobindo is above all these lesser modes; instead he goes to the Spirit that is at the base of all things and, by evolutionary

[1] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 492.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[3] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book II, Canto XIV, p. 291.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

stages, is becoming more and more manifest. All matter, life and mind, nature and existence are expressions, modes, articulations of the Spirit. This is not a mere philosophical concept. This is an authentic experience and he makes poetry the vehicle of this experience:

"A spirit dreamed in the crude cosmic whirl,
Mind flowed unknowing in the sap of life
And Matter's breasts suckled the divine Idea.
A miracle of the Absolute was born,
Infinity put on a finite soul,
All ocean lived within a wandering drop,
A time-made body housed the Illimitable.
To live this Mystery out our souls came here."[1]

On the background of the Spirit all assume a different turn, evolution appears as a vast godward unveiling instead of a chance occurrence. Man is seen as a living tool of the Spirit, long unconscious of his destiny. The Spirit is infinite:

"Out of the still Immensity all came!
These million universes were to it
The poor light-bubbles of a trivial game,
A fragile glimmer in the Infinite."[2]

Also it is infinitesimal:

"A tiny plasm on a little globe
In the small system of a dwarflike sun,
A little life wearing the flesh for robe,
A little mind winged through wide space to run!

"It lived, it knew, it saw its self sublime,
Deathless, outmeasuring Space, outlasting Time."[3]

Sri Aurobindo reveals the many facets of the Spirit, its various modes of expression. In fact, in terms of the Spirit all things arrive at a sure coherence, a sure basis, an everlasting meaning.

How does this Spirit express itself? A novel form, a mere new vehicle — is it sufficient to express the Spirit? The form does not produce the Spirit. It is the Spirit that conceives the form to be. It is the substance behind the breath

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Bk. II, Canto I, p. 101.
[2] *Collected Poems* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 5), p. 164.
[3] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

underlying the outer measure of the verse that is all important. If the language is ready, if the recipient instrument is plastic enough, living enough, it can sculpture its own form. But as a rule there is no fixed way of its working, for the Spirit being infinite can create infinite forms, according to the manifesting conditions. In Sri Aurobindo the lyric becomes an occasion for unveiling something occult, something true, something of the eternal fragment, the infinite movement, the eternal moment. The epic is not a mere narrative of the outer clash of powers, movements or circumstances but "a more and more subtle and variable inwardness and a greater fusion and living identity of soul motive, indicative idea, suggestive description and intensely significant speech and action."[1] Equally too, his dramas show not outer actions, characters or passions; these are only webs, the fashioning moulds for the revelation of the soul and its development instead of Karma, fate and life being the determinant entities. He goes behind and beyond life and becomings and interprets life and deeds, passions and growths in terms of soul's flowering. Thus he shows what forms and its possibilities are there for the future. To fulfil not in the ways of outer Nature but in the movement of highest possibility in man, his divine outcome — that is the goal, that is the immortal culmination.

Words themselves are to him messengers from the heart of the unknown. They are the seeds that are capable of awaking infinite resonances, echoes and vibrations of the Spirit, the hidden nature of things. Born in the highest self of delight, they come like flame-waves, radiant with intuitive gleams or the maskless illuminations of the overhead planes, making utterances the vehicles of lasting truth, beauty, and delight. So long we have had flashes of this utterance in English. The Vedic and Upanishadic lore are replete with this mantric chant. It was for Sri Aurobindo to bring down this mantric roll into English by exploiting to the full the psychological potentialities of the language, discovering its hidden sound-values, sound-significances and its soul of sound. The word is not a casual instrument of expression. Rather it has deeper roots, deeper possibilities, deeper truths of which our material nature is unaware. It is not only power, it is the ray of the Sun, the OM. If one can attune oneself to this sphere of consciousness, words can reveal immense possibilities, untold suggestions and untraced significances. Consider the lines:

> "Assailing in front, oppressing from above,
> A concrete mass of conscious power, he bore
> The tyranny of her divine desire."[2]

Mark the roll of vowels, intercepted by a few hard consonants giving the lines

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 9), p. 266.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Bk. X, Canto IV, p. 667.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

a sublime power and endless suggestion. The significance of the words, their tonal value, have another intensity, another greatness and majesty. Or read how the Spirit

> "In its endless moment saw the ages pass.
> All still was in the silence of the gods.
> The prophet moment covered limitless Space ...
> Over wide earth brooded the infinite bliss."[1]

Again — now about Nature:

> "Her gulfs stood nude, her far transcendences
> Flamed in transparencies of crowded light."[2]

We see the words are not used carelessly or with facile abandon; rather they become living agents, bearers of intuition and revelation. They open secret doors, usher undivined planes; they are the instruments of the Spirit.

Sri Aurobindo as the poet of the future gives us a prophetic vision of the coming age. This prophetic vision is not a mere Utopia, a dream dreamt by some escapist philosopher. It is the vision of a poet, a yogi and a seer. And poetry becomes to him a radiant vehicle to express this vision, this experience. As the leader of evolution,

> "He sails through life and death and other life,
> He travels on through waking and through sleep.
> A power is on him from her occult force
> That ties him to his own creation's fate,
> And never can the mighty traveller rest
> And never can the mystic voyage cease,
> Till the nescient dusk is lifted from man's soul
> And the morns of God have overtaken his night."[3]

This is the vision, the experience and the truth behind his poetry. These mark the new age, the coming of a new consciousness whose first impact is manifest in his poetry.

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book XI, Canto I, p. 712.
[2] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), Book I, Canto V, p. 88.
[3] *Ibid.*, Book I, Canto IV, p. 72.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

INDIA, THE LEADER OF THE NEW WORLD

SPEECH BY TARINI PATIL

Today all the nations of the world are trying to arrive at a richer and completer development of which the natural outcome will be a life of harmony, peace and happiness. All the nations are struggling hard to arrive at some definite solution for a better life. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "The present era of the world is a stage of immense transformations. Not one but many radical ideas are at work in the mind of humanity and agitate its life with a vehement seeking and effort at change."[1] The present state of affairs is most discouraging and frustrating. The existing evils of life, the loss of high and noble ideals and a still greater loss of values, with the increasing sense of insecurity and tension, have given rise to a sincere longing to create a new world-order based upon Truth, light and freedom. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have said that in the realisation of this aim India is destined to be the world-leader. Why, one may ask, has India been chosen, been called upon to lead humanity to this aim? What special reasons entitle her to this choice?

Wild cries of protestation might arise against this choice from all parts of the globe. The materialist would come nudging forward, considering the choice of India to be the most fatal blunder in history, for to him India signifies nothing beyond the fact that it is a land of poverty and illiteracy, with a thronging multitude pressing for employment, fighting desperately for survival.

It is very true that materially India is no match for Europe and America who in comparison seem to be wallowing in wealth; but this deficiency does not deprive her of the greater store of inner wealth. Sri Aurobindo says, "The soul that lives in God is more perfect than the soul that lives only in outward mind or only for the claims and joys of thinking and living matter."[2] All the materialist's wealth put together will look like base metal or sound like the jingling of a few coins before the endless riches of the spirit. "India has constantly believed in worlds behind of which the material world is only the ante-chamber."[3] This is what Sri Aurobindo once told the youth of India: "Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything."[4]

Just as the materialist questions, the rationalist intellectual will also come forward to question India's capacity as a leader, for he considers that nation to be the fittest leader which has the most powerful and dynamic

[1] *Ideals and Progress* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 326.
[2] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 70. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 20.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

mind. Apparently the West seems best to fulfil this need for it has arrived, as Sri Aurobindo remarks, at "the immense gains of the intellect and the expansion of the mind, the modern many-sidedness of the reason and inexhaustible habit of inquiry, the power of endless generalisation and precise detail."[1] The West with so well-equipped a mind seems to possess the capacity to probe into the inmost depths of truth and plumb all its hidden secrets and mysteries. But in reality it has so long been dwelling only on a colossal illusion, an illusion it believed to be the truth. Today we can see its apparent shortcomings and make-beliefs that betray what Sri Aurobindo calls the "ill-disguised evidence of the uneliminated survival of the triumphant barbarian."[2]

The movement in the West was from below upwards, from outside in, and herein lies its central weakness. It has sought to change the surroundings, the circumstances rather than turning to its true self. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, it "seeks to renovate humanity by schemes of society and systems of government" and "to bring about the millennium by an act of Parliament".[3]

Mankind and the world today have arrived at a point — a crucial point — where things are taking the most dark, ugly and distorted of forms. The atmosphere looms thick with forces compelling a break-away from the old and a taking birth into a new mode of life. A choice is given to humanity either to grovel in the squalor of the present or leap into the unknown. Each nation is at the present juncture a battle ground for these grim universal forces. Every nation is undergoing this crisis — this sense of a weighing insecurity.

Till now all eyes were turned to the West as the sole efficient guide but all the efforts of the West seem to be leading to what Sri Aurobindo calls a "slow combustion and swift explosion".[4]

The problems of the present-day world have grown so acute that an urgent remedy is called for and awaited by everybody. "No nation or community can any longer remain psychologically cloistered and apart"[5] in this great attempt to save humanity.

So long there was a great tussle between two forces — the material and the spiritual. In Sri Aurobindo's words, "the most vital issue of the age is whether the future progress of humanity is to be governed by the modern economic and materialistic mind of the West or by a nobler pragmatism guided, uplifted and enlightened by spiritual culture and knowledge".[6] But now the fight is resolved by man's awareness that so long as life and

[1] [2] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 27.
[3] *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 17.
[4] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 23.
[5] *Ideals and Progress* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 326. [6] *Ibid.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

humanity are confined and governed by the physical, vital and mental, they will continue to move in the same old grooves of sorrow, anxiety and tension.

Today there has arisen a still greater awareness — an awareness of a possible light from Asia, and this mainly from India, who will one day kindle with her light the whole of the world. Years ago Sri Aurobindo had said: "A nation is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the material in use, the lines of the divine architecture."[1]

India, as the Mother puts it, is to be "the Guru of the world" for she has made a good headway from the early stages of seeking and experiment. Her great and glorious tradition — a tradition that is the very life-breath of her whole being — has lent to her the maturity, strength and wisdom of a fully prepared leader. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth", she is "the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality."[2] Therefore she is fully equipped to light the way of humanity's future. She is fit not only to take us to the shores of a new world but also to help humanity to surmount and overcome its present insufficiencies and incapacities, for she holds the very key that unlocks "the modern riddle of the Sphinx."[3] "India preserves the truth that preserves the world," says Sri Aurobindo. For the whole foundation and structure of India's existence and the pattern of her life spring directly from the truths of the Spirit. She has always sought "to find a basis of living in the higher spiritual truth and to live from the inner spirit outwards".[4]

It is her unassailable foundations, her deep and unfathomable roots that blossomed forth into a "mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience."[5]

Since her very birth India has had the clear discernment of and a deep insight into the purpose and meaning of her existence and her mission upon this earth. She is indeed a prodigy among nations to have seized at the very outset the Eternal as her central source, her guiding principle, and her sustaining power. This energy ran through every sphere of life, thought and activity. India's social system, her philosophy, her religion, her art and literature, in fact "her whole dharma or law of being" were founded upon this great truth.

But as Sri Aurobindo remarks, "Our sense of the greatness of our past

[1] [2] *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 16.
[3] *Ideals and Progress* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 326.
[4] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 20.
[5] *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 17.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

must not be made a fatally hypnotising lure to inertia"[1], a "determination to live only on our past cultural capital, to eke it out, small as it has grown in our wasteful and incompetent hands, to the last anna".[2]

"To live on our capital without using it for fresh gains" he says, "is to end in bankruptcy and pauperism."[3] We must carry on the work of the past and "not make of the past a fetish,"[4] or else we not only blot and efface our great past but sap the growth and outflowering of a greater future. "The past has to be used and spent," says Sri Aurobindo, "as mobile and current capital for some larger profit, acquisition and development of the future."[5] We have stepped out of the past because the past could no longer contain us and now we have to move "forward to a large repossession of ourselves in which we shall make a better, more living, more real"[6] possibility for the advent of a still brighter and more glorious light. "We do not belong to the past dawns but to the noons of the future".[7]

But then what must India do to rise "to the height of her mission and proclaim the Truth to the world"?[8] The Mother says, "The number one problem for India now is to find back and manifest her soul."[9] "It is when the soul awakens," says Sri Aurobindo, "that a nation is really alive."[10]

What must we do as Indians to help India in her great mission ? "We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves"[11] for "it is in the spirit that strength is eternal".[12] As Sri Aurobindo tells us, "You must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire."[13] India must then rise and say to humanity: "The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life."[14]

The task before India is to reconcile spirit and life and for this "we need to work out thoroughly in life what we have always known in the spirit".[15] It is in this that "lies the secret of the needed harmony between the essential meaning of our past culture and the environmental requirements of our future".[16] India has to impart to the world this spiritual knowledge. By spirituality we do not mean a running away from life into the secret recesses of the spirit, for, in the words of the Mother, "True spirituality is not to renounce life, but to make life perfect with a Divine Perfection."[17]

[1] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 33.
[2] [3] *Ibid.*, p. 21. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 21. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 393.
[7] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 8.
[8] *The Mother on India.* [9] *Ibid.*
[10] *The Awakening Soul of India* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 2), p. 36. [11] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[12] [13] *Ibid.*, p. 14. [14] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[15] *The Foundations of Indian Culture* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 14), p. 37. [16] *Ibid.*
[17] *The Mother on India.*

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

India is destined to impart the knowledge of the Truth and thereby prepare a spiritual race. But what is meant by knowledge of the Truth ? Here are Sri Aurobindo's words: "Knowledge of the Truth means for Indian thought not intellectual assent or recognition, but a new consciousness and a life according to the Truth of the Spirit."

We are all aware that we are on the brink of a new world — a new world pressing to be born, nay, born but compelled to wait for man's total acceptance which can come about only with a change of his consciousness, with his transformation. For,

> "Mortality bears ill the eternal's touch:
> It fears the pure divine intolerance
> Of that assault of ether and of fire."[1]

This assault will dissolve in its blaze all earthly compromise and vain hypocrisy. The new world which in reality will usher in the supramental light and force can grow — I say grow because it is already born — only when the earth is ready, only when there is a simultaneous movement from below. A just and right movement from below can best be initiated by a change of consciousness. Such a change of consciousness, such a growth into brighter realms of truth and light "can only come about by a spiritual change of our being and a radical and fundamental change, an evolution or revolution of our nature".[2] This can be done only by yoga. So it is as the Guru of yoga that India is rising today, not of the yoga that shuns life but of the integral yoga which draws all life and creation into its wide transforming embrace.

The problems of the world must be solved, its discords removed, the tensions eased and eliminated. But the external, the artificial and mechanical means in which the West has so far laid its entire trust cannot be far-reaching or permanent in effect. What the world needs is a sure light that can dispel the darkness. And this light burns in India. It has been there hidden in its secret recesses from times immemorial but now in this world engulfed in darkness it is blazing forth like a beacon. A few have pierced through the thick fog and caught a glimpse of it, others are aware of its existence but are still groping to find it. But the groping cannot be for long. The light is rising higher and gaining ground. The time has come when all must soon cluster round it and sing in a million-voiced harmony hosannas of a new world, which in reality is no other than the Supramental World of Sri Aurobindo.

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), p. 7.
[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 41.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Divine Superman

This is thy work and the aim of thy being and that for which thou art here, to become the divine superman and a perfect vessel of the Godhead. All else that thou has to do, is only a making thyself ready or a joy by the way or a fall from the purpose. But the goal is this and the purpose is this and not in the power of the way or the joy by the way but in the joy of the goal is the greatness and the delight of thy being. The joy of the way is because that which is drawing thee is also with thee on thy path and the power to climb was given thee that thou mightest mount to thy own summits.

If thou hast a duty, this is thy duty; if thou askest what shall be thy aim, let this be thy aim; if thou demandest pleasure, there is no greater joy, for all other joy is broken or limited, the joy of a dream or the joy of a sleep or the joy of the self-forgetting. But this is the joy of thy whole being. For if thou sayest what is my being, this is thy being, the Divine, and all else is only its broken or its perverse appearance. If thou seekest the Truth, this is the Truth. Place it before thee and in all things be faithful to it.

It has been well said by one who saw but through a veil and mistook the veil for the face that thy aim is to become thyself; and he said well again that the nature of man is to transcend himself. This is indeed his nature and that is indeed the divine aim of his self-transcending.

What then is the self that thou hast to transcend and what is the Self that thou hast to become? For it is here that thou shouldst make no error; for this error, not to know thyself, is the fountain of all thy grief and the cause of all thy stumbling.

That which thou hast to transcend is the self that thou appearest to be, and that is man as thou knowest him, the apparent Purusha. And what is this man? He is a mental being enslaved to life and matter; and where he is not enslaved to life and matter, he is the slave of his mind. But this is a great and heavy servitude; for to be the slave of mind is to be the slave of the false, the limited and the apparent.

The Self that thou hast to become is that self that thou art within behind the veil of mind and life and matter. It is to be the spiritual, the divine, the superman, the real Purusha. For that which is above the mental being is the superman. It is to be the master of thy mind, thy life and thy body; it is to be a king over Nature of whom thou art now the tool, lifted above her who now has thee under her feet. It is to be free and not a slave, to be one and not divided, to be immortal and not obscured by death, to be full of light and not darkened, to be full of bliss and not the sport of grief and suffering, to

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

be uplifted into power and not cast down into weakness. It is to live in the Infinite and possess the finite. It is to live in God and be one with him in his being. To become thyself is to be this and all that flows from it.

Be free in thyself, and therefore free in thy mind, free in thy life and thy body. For the Spirit is freedom.

Be one with God and all beings; live in thyself and not in thy little ego. For the Spirit is unity.

Be thyself immortal, and put not thy faith in death; for death is not of thyself, but of thy body. For the Spirit is immortality.

To be immortal is to be infinite in being and consciousness and bliss; for the Spirit is infinite and that which is finite lives only by his infinity.

These things thou art, therefore thou canst become all these; but if thou art not these things, then thou couldst never become them. What is within thee, that alone can be revealed in thy being. Thou appearest indeed to be other than this, but wherefore shouldst thou enslave thyself to appearances?

Rather arise, transcend thyself, become thyself. Thou art man and the whole nature of man is to become more than himself. He was the man-animal, he has become more than the animal man. He is the thinker, the craftsman, the seeker after beauty. He shall be more than the thinker, he shall be the seer of knowledge; he shall be more than the craftsman, he shall be the creator and master of his creation; he shall be more than the seeker of beauty, for he shall enjoy all beauty and all delight. Physical he seeks for this immortal substance; vital he seeks after immortal life and the infinite power of his being; mental and partial in knowledge, he seeks after the whole light and the utter vision.

To possess these is to become the superman; for he is to rise out of mind into the Supermind. Call it the divine mind or Knowledge or the Supermind; it is the power and light of the divine will and the divine consciousness. By the Supermind the Spirit saw and created himself in the worlds, by that he lives in them and governs them. By that he is Swarat Samrat, self-ruler and all-ruler.

Supermind is superman; therefore to rise beyond mind is the condition.

To be the superman is to live the divine life, to be a god; for the gods are the powers of God. Be a power of God in humanity.

To live in the divine Being and let the consciousness and bliss, the will and knowledge of the Spirit possess thee and play with thee and through thee, this is the meaning.

This is the transfiguration of thyself on the mountain. It is to discover God as thyself and reveal him to thyself in all things. Live in his being, shine

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

with his light, act with his power, rejoice with his bliss. Be that Fire and that Sun and that Ocean. Be that joy and that greatness and that beauty.

When thou hast done this even in part, thou hast attained to the first steps of supermanhood.

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, pp. 74-6.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

12 September 1965

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WILL THE NEW CREATION BE PRECEDED BY DESTRUCTION?

SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

Now that the supramental Truth which will create a New Age in human evolution is increasingly pressing to manifest in the external life of the world, the question naturally arises as to how it will deal with those elements in the life and consciousness of humanity which still obstinately resist its advent and which blindly or deliberately side with the forces of Falsehood which vehemently seek to prevent its reign upon earth. Or, since the supramental Truth directly manifests the Will of God, how will God deal with these obstructing elements in humanity? Will He destroy them?

The majority of men conceive of God as God of Love and Mercy. To them the idea of God as destroyer seems too shocking and horrible. But a more clear-sighted and courageous vision of existence ought to make it clear that destruction is as necessary a part of the cosmic process as creation and preservation and that without it any new progress would become impossible in the present state of life. As Sri Aurobindo says:

"Destruction is always a simultaneous or alternate element which keeps pace with creation and it is by destroying and renewing that the Master of Life does his long work of preservation. More, destruction is the first condition of progress. Inwardly, the man who does not destroy his lower self-formations, cannot rise to a greater existence. Outwardly also, the nation or community or race which shrinks too long from destroying and replacing its past forms of life, is itself destroyed, rots and perishes and out of its debris other nations, communities and races are formed. By destruction of the old giant occupants man made himself a place upon earth. By destruction of the Titans the gods maintain the continuity of the divine Law in the cosmos. Whoever prematurely attempts to get rid of this law of battle and destruction, strives vainly against the greater will of the World-Spirit. Whoever turns from it in the weakness of his lower members... is showing not true virtue, but a want of spiritual courage to face the sterner truths of Nature and of action and existence."[1]

This is Gita's conception of God as the Time-Spirit who speaks of himself: "I am Time the Destroyer of beings." But the Gita also makes it clear that this action of God as the Destroyer is not the whole essence or the complete truth of His cosmic working. It is a transitional necessity in the

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), pp. 370-371.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

lower stages of evolution in which man lives in his egoistic consciousness enveloped in the Ignorance and blindly driven by forces of the lower nature. In this condition he is not always sufficiently responsive to the progressive will of the Time-Spirit in the universe. Not only so, but he often becomes an instrument in the hands of the Asuric forces of Falsehood which are opposed to the increasing manifestation of the Divine Truth in the world. So long as there is this obstruction and opposition in man the necessity of destruction also remains. It can be dispensed with only when man consciously begins to respond to and side with God's progressive will in the cosmos. More and more he does so, less and less becomes the necessity of destruction. God does not delight in destruction for destruction's sake; He uses it only as a means for a greater creation because man in his lower egoistic nature refuses to move forward by the smoother and harmonious process of consenting to His Will. As Sri Aurobindo says: "God the Time-Spirit does not destroy for the sake of destruction, but to make the ways clear in the cyclic process for a greater rule and a progressing manifestation."[1] But when urged by the call of the higher nature man begins to consent to God's Will, then God also changes his manner of dealing with him. The fierce and terrible face of the Destroyer changes into the face of the Friend.

It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo, while admitting that the law of progress through strife and destruction is not the best way of progress, also points out that it cannot be replaced by the higher law of harmony and peace and love until man is truly ready for it. "It is self-evident", he says, "that in the actual life of man intellectual, social, political, moral we can make no real step forward without a struggle, a battle between what exists and lives and what seeks to exist and live and between all that stands behind either. It is impossible, at least as men and things are, to advance, to grow, to fulfil and still to observe really and utterly that principle of harmlessness which is yet placed before us as the highest and best law of conduct."[2]

God's higher law of peace and love can prevail in the world only when man outgrows his present egoistic consciousness sufficiently to deserve it and not before. Any premature rejection of the necessity of destruction would only result in setting back the forward march of humanity's progress:

"No real peace can be till the heart of man deserves peace; the law of Vishnu cannot prevail till the debt to Rudra is paid. To turn aside then and preach to a still unevolved mankind the law of love and oneness? Teachers of the law of love and oneness there must be, for by that way must come the ultimate salvation. But not till the Time-Spirit in man is ready, can the inner and ultimate prevail over the outer and immediate reality. Christ and Buddha have come and gone, but it is Rudra who still holds the world in the hollow

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 372. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of his hand. And meanwhile the fierce forward labour of mankind tormented and oppressed by the powers that are profiteers of egoistic force and their servants cries for the sword of the Hero of the struggle and the word of its prophet."[1]

*

This Gita's conception of God as the Time-Spirit in the aspect of the Destroyer should not be identified with the crude Semitic religious idea of God as a stern and wrathful almighty Creator and Judge who punishes the sinners and casts them into an eternal hell. The Jews who brought forward most prominently this idea and "from whom it overspread a great part of the world, could believe in a God of righteousness who was exclusive, arbitrary, wrathful, jealous, often cruel and even wantonly sanguinary."[2] But, according to Sri Aurobindo, this idea "even apart from these extravagances of a childish religious belief,... is a crude and imperfect idea of the Divine, when taken by itself, because it takes an inferior and an external truth for the main truth and it tends to prevent a higher approach to a more intimate reality. It exaggerates the importance of the sense of sin and thereby prolongs and increases the soul's fear and self-distrust and weakness."[3] What the Gita points at is an aspect of the Divine which is as essential to world-action as the aspect of Love. As Sri Aurobindo says: "In the divine no less than in ordinary human character and action there are always two strands, sweetness and strength, mildness and force, *saumya* and *raudra*, the force that bears and harmonises, the force that imposes itself and compels, Vishnu and Ishana, Shiva and Rudra. The two are equally necessary to a perfect world-action."[4]

But even though we may speak of this Rudra aspect of the Divine as "fierce" and "terrible" and "wrathful", we must remember that these are only human images of divine qualities which disfigure their true nature. God who has created all is equal to all and is not moved by the blind passions of wrath, hatred or disgust even though he has to destroy at times with a shattering vehemence what needs to be destroyed in the progressive march of the universe. As Sri Aurobindo explains: "The Divine is equal to all, an impartial sustainer of his universe, who views all with equal eyes, assents to the law of developing being which he has brought out of the depths of his existence, tolerates what has to be tolerated, depresses what has to be depressed, raises what has to be raised, creates, sustains and destroys with a perfect and equal understanding of all causes and results and working out of the spiritual and pragmatic meaning of all phenomena. God does not create in obedience to any troubled passion of desire or maintain and preserve through an

[1] *Essays on the Gita* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 13), p. 372.
[2] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 538. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 539. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 708.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

attachment of partial preference or destroy in a fury of wrath, disgust or aversion."[1]

We have, therefore, to look at this Rudra aspect of God and its destructive action as a part of the total process of God's working in the world. We have to courageously admit its necessity in the earlier stages of the evolutionary movement through Ignorance where every step forward often requires the destruction of the old formations which oppose God's progressive will in the world. It is only in the higher stages of evolution when this opposition changes into willing acceptance of God's Will that this necessity of destruction ceases and God begins to deal with us by his gentler method of love and harmony.

*

This issue assumes a special significance and intensity during those critical periods in the world's history which arrive at the turning-points in its evolutionary development and which Sri Aurobindo has called the Hours of God. Whether the forward step in evolution at these points will be taken under the law of strife and destruction or the law of love and harmony depends altogether on the condition of humanity at these times.

At the present moment humanity is passing through one of these critical periods which is of supreme importance to its future destiny. A new Truth, the supramental Truth, which is the next principle to emerge in the terrestrial evolution after Mind, has manifested in the inner atmosphere of the earth and from there is pressing to emerge in the external life of humanity. But simultaneously with the manifestation of this Truth there has also occurred a precipitation of very dark and dangerous forces of Falsehood trying with all their vehemence and fury to obstruct and destroy that Truth. They are engaged in a dire battle with it because they know that when it succeeds in establishing itself upon earth their days would be ended. Fearing their destruction they are fighting a crucial battle to retain their grip over earth and humanity. This invisible opposition to the advent of Truth on the inner plane is projected in the external life of the world through the human instruments, individual and collective, of these adverse forces.

The victory of the supramental Truth over these opposing forces of Falsehood is absolutely certain because that Truth is empowered with the omnipotent Divine Will. But whether humanity will receive that Truth in a harmonious evolutionary mutation or after undergoing a catastrophic destruction will depend upon its readiness to receive it. If it willingly consents to change its consciousness to receive the Truth, then its evolutionary development will work itself out smoothly and harmoniously. But if it persists in its

[1] *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 21), p. 673.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

present egoistic consciousness and blindly sides with the obstructing forces of Falsehood then it will not be able to avert destruction.

These are the two alternatives facing humanity from which it will have to make its choice. The Mother has drawn our pointed attention to this choice in a recent message:

"The Future of the Earth depends on a Change of Consciousness.

"The only hope for the future is in a change of man's consciousness and the change is bound to come.

"But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances."[1]

Sri Aurobindo has also pointed out the same choice in the following words:

"No system indeed by its own force can bring about the change that humanity really needs; for that can only come by its growth into the firmly realised possibilities of its own higher nature, and this growth depends on an inner and not an outer change. But outer changes may at least prepare favourable conditions for that more real amelioration, — or on the contrary they may lead to such conditions that the sword of Kalki can alone purify the earth from the burden of an obstinately Asuric humanity. The choice lies with the race itself; for as it sows, so shall it reap the fruit of its Karma."[2]

If, therefore, the coming New Creation will have to be preceded by a violent destruction, by "the death-dance of Kali", it will not be because of God's choice. It will only be because the present humanity has not as yet inwardly changed enough to be fit for God's gentler and kindlier handling. If instead of opening to the new Truth and allowing it to re-create its life, it yields to the promptings of Falsehood, then it is certain that it is still the same crude recalcitrant stuff which can be changed only by a severe and drastic method. In Sri Aurobindo's vivid words:

"Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped; as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal, his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses."[3]

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1964, p. 124.
[2] *War and Self-Determination* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 635.
[3] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 393.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

This method of changing humanity by a fierce hammering or by giving "a good drubbing"[1] as the Mother puts it, is extremely distressing and wasteful. Nevertheless, the Divine has to use it so long as the consciousness of humanity does not improve. The Divine always likes to act in peace and harmony; He prefers to change the world by love. But if humanity is not ready for it, what can He do?

*

Therefore whether at the present moment the manifestation of the supramental Truth will or will not be preceded by destruction will depend upon the choice that humanity makes. It may, however, be argued that ultimately it is not the human choice but the Divine Grace that decides everything; so in the present crisis also the final decision will rest in the Divine's hands. This is no doubt true, but it is also necessary to remember that in the actual workings of the world the human will and choice are not irrelevant factors. As Sri Aurobindo explains:

"If everything depends on the Divine intervention, then man is only a puppet and there is no use of sadhana, and there are no conditions, no law of things — therefore no universe, but only the Divine rolling things about at his pleasure. No doubt in the last resort all can be said to be the Divine cosmic working, but it is through persons, through forces that it works — under the conditions of Nature. Special intervention there can be and is, but all cannot be special intervention."[2]

In all the world-movements, therefore, the human will is a factor that counts, even though it is relative and cannot be the ultimate determinant of world-events. The Divine Will, even though it is absolute and unconditioned, does not altogether overrule the human will but works through it. And as man exercises his will, he has to take the consequences.

*

In all evolutionary transitions there is a selective process. Those that are fit for the new mutation survive and are lifted up to the higher evolutionary status, while those that are unfit are destroyed and eliminated. This principle, operating in the biological evolution, has its parallel in the psychological and spiritual evolution also. In the evolutionary transition through

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1965, p. 92.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), pp. 611-12.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

which we are passing at the present moment and which is of most momentous consequence in earth's evolutionary history, there will therefore be a similar selective process for both the individuals and the nations. Those who will prove their fitness by answering the present call of the Time-Spirit, by collaborating with the manifestation of the supramental Truth, will be lifted up to the higher evolutionary status, while those who not only obstinately refuse to answer that call by remaining stuck up in the blind grooves of their ego's perversity, but even side with the forces of Falsehood which are opposed to the advent of Truth, will only invite on their head the blow of the Terrible Rudra. Here is the warning uttered by the Master of Truth in unequivocal terms:

"Unhappy is the man or the nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call. But thrice woe to them who are strong and ready, yet waste the force or misuse the moment; for them is irreparable loss or a great destruction."[1]

WEALTH AND YOGA

SPEECH BY PRAKASH PATEL

Modern civilisation is largely Western civilisation; the great historic civilisations of Asia have not yet succeeded in reasserting themselves. The keynote of this modern civilisation is material well-being *par excellence*; an external opulence is its *raison d'être*. As Sri Aurobindo observes: "Commercialism is a modern sociological phenomenon; one might almost say, that is the whole phenomenon of modern society."[2] Man, while ceasing to be a physical barbarian, has, sadly enough, become a vitalistic and economic barbarian, who, in the words of Sri Aurobindo "makes the satisfaction of wants and desires and the accumulation of possessions his standard and aim. His ideal man is not the cultured or noble or thoughtful or moral or religious, but the successful man. To arrive, to succeed, to produce, to accumulate, to possess is his existence. The accumulation of wealth and more wealth, the adding of possessions to possessions, opulence, show, pleasure, a cumbrous inartistic luxury, a plethora of conveniences, life devoid of beauty and nobility, religion vulgarised or coldly formalised, politics and government turned into a

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 1.
[2] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 463.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

trade and profession, enjoyment itself made a business, this is commercialism....His idea of civilisation is comfort, his idea of morals social respectability, his idea of politics the encouragement of industry, the opening of markets, exploitation and trade following the flag, his idea of religion at best a pietistic formalism or the satisfaction of certain vitalistic emotions. He values education for its utility in fitting a man for success in a competitive or, it may be, a socialised industrial existence, science for the useful inventions and knowledge, the comforts, conveniences, machinery of production with which it arms him, its power for organisation, regulation, stimulus to production. The opulent plutocrat and the successful mammoth capitalist and organiser of industry are the supermen of the commercial age and the true, if often occult rulers of its society."[1]

I make no apology for quoting Sri Aurobindo *in extenso*; what he wrote of society nearly fifty years ago is at least as true, if not more true, of society today. We can readily understand why Sri Aurobindo asserted: "I cannot give to the barbarous comfort and encumbered ostentation of European life the name of civilisation. Men who are not free in their souls and nobly rhythmical in their appointments are not civilised."[2] The Mother has expressed the same truth — concerning this great flaw of modern society — in equally cogent terms: "In this material world, for men, money is more *sacred* than the Divine's Will."[3] We see, then, that man's life in modern times is centred mainly on wealth; he has become so enamoured with money and material possessions that he has made them an end in themselves. Wealth has been turned into an almost universal criterion; the worth of an individual and a group is counted largely in terms of the wealth they possess. In earlier civilisations, the learned and priestly as also the warrior and governing classes were given precedence over the rest of the people; today the wealthy man is all too often revered. In our times, even wars are the result to a considerable extent of economic clashes between nations keenly and often unscrupulously striving to achieve economic superiority. The excessive and unrestrained desire for wealth has almost proved a bane to our civilisation, not only morally and spiritually but also materially.

All this represents an extreme approach to one of the essential constituents of civilisation; probably as a violent reaction against it there exists another approach, entirely its opposite. Asceticism and an austere bareness and simplicity of life are preached and practised by not a few who endeavour for a life of religion and spirituality. Indeed, it is a common device to support one's pretensions to spirituality by speaking contemptuously of material life. It is regrettable that very many, especially in the West, are

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), pp. 72-73.
[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 125.
[3] *Mother India*, April 1965, p. 5.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

under the impression that asceticism is part of yoga. Even the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines yoga as a "Hindu system of philosophic meditation and asceticism designed to effect the reunion of the devotee's soul with the universal spirit."

To believe, however, that asceticism and a recoil from money and material possessions constitute a necessary part of spirituality is to be under a severe illusion. The Mother elucidates this point definitively: "The attitude of the ascetic who says, 'I want nothing' and the attitude of the man of the world who says, 'I want this thing' are the same. The one may be as much attached to his renunciation as the other to his possession."[1] The urge towards asceticism becomes particularly disastrous when it is made a general rule for all to follow. Again I quote Sri Aurobindo: "The acceptance of poverty is noble and beneficial in a class or an individual, but it becomes fatal and pauperises life of its richness and expansion if it is perversely organised into a general or national ideal."[2] A renunciation of the various aspects of life is an overhasty and ill-advised step for one, such as the dynamic spiritual seeker, who is seeking to improve and perfect life. The Mother clearly says: "True spirituality is not to renounce life but to make life perfect with a Divine perfection."

We find, then, that both these attitudes to wealth are unsatisfactory and undesirable, the attitude which makes the acquisition of wealth the goal and purpose of life, which involves desire and avarice for the sake of material possessions and comfort, and the attitude which rejects all wealth as a thing evil by its very nature and something that is incompatible with a religious or spiritual seeking. To have the right attitude to wealth necessitates a knowledge of what money actually is and what part material things can play in a spiritual life. Sri Aurobindo points out: "Money is the visible sign of a universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of the outer life. In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine. But like other powers of the Divine it is delegated here and in the ignorance of the lower Nature can be usurped for the uses of the ego or held by Asuric influences and perverted to their purpose. This is indeed one of the three forces — power, wealth, sex — that have the strongest attraction for the human ego and the Asura and are most generally misheld and misused by those who retain them."[3] "It is true," the Mother says in the same vein, "that money is a force and a means, but it must never be allowed to become a ruler and a tyrant."[4] The Mother further explains the present state of money: "The power of

[1] *Conversations* (1971), p. 13.
[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 103.
[3] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 11.
[4] *White Roses* (1973), p. 57.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

money is at present under the influence or in the hands of the forces and beings of the vital world. It is because of this influence that you never see money going in any considerable amount to the cause of Truth. Always it goes astray, because it is in the clutch of the hostile forces and is one of the principal means by which they keep their grip upon the earth."[1] Money, then, is a force and a means, indispensable to the richness and fullness of the outer life, a richness and fullness that should be worthy of the inner life. In the words of the Mother, "Money is not meant to make money, money is meant to make the earth ready for the advent of the new creation."[2]

What, then, should be the place of wealth in yoga; how should it be treated? Sri Aurobindo gives excellent guidance:

"To reconquer it for the Divine to whom it belongs and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the Sadhaka.

"You must neither turn with an ascetic shrinking from the money power, the means it gives and the objects it brings, nor cherish a rajasic attachment to them or a spirit of enslaving self-indulgence in their gratifications. Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service....

"Any perturbation of mind with regard to money and its use, any claim, any grudging is a sure index of some imperfection or bondage.

"The ideal Sadhaka in this kind is one who if required to live poorly can so live and no sense of want will affect him or interfere with the full inner play of the divine consciousness, and if he is required to live richly, can so live and never for a moment fall into desire or attachment to his wealth or to the things that he uses or servitude to self-indulgence or a weak bondage to the habits that the possession of riches creates. The divine Will is all for him and the divine Ananda.

"In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision."[3]

I need elaborate no further on what Sri Aurobindo has so well expressed. Only let it be said that both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have stressed that in our use of material things we should deal with them with care and gentleness. "It is very true," says Sri Aurobindo "that physical things have a consciousness within them which feels and responds to care and is sensitive to careless touch and rough handling. To know or feel that and learn to be

[1] *Conversations* (1971), p. 52.
[2] *Mother India*, August 1965, p. 5.
[3] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), pp. 12, 13, 14.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

careful of them is a great progress of consciousness."[1] Further, "Material things are not to be despised — without them there can be no manifestation in the material world."[2]

Thus we are given clear guidance on what our attitude should be towards wealth, how we should regard it, how treat it. It is only a whole-hearted adoption of this approach to money and material possessions that can solve the taxing problems invariably involved in the acquisition and use of wealth. No mere external change can suffice; it would be quite illusory to believe that any socio-economic system whether it be *laissez-faire* or capitalism, socialism or communism, could ever be a panacea in this respect. Here, as in other fields, a change in the psychology of man is the only solution, a change in the mentality, a change of heart.

I consider it most fitting to conclude with a paragraph from *The Life Divine*:

"It is almost universally supposed that spiritual life must necessarily be a life of ascetic spareness, a pushing away of all that is not absolutely needed for the bare maintenance of the body; and this is valid for a spiritual life which is in its nature and intention a life of withdrawal from life. Even apart from that ideal, it might be thought that the spiritual turn must always make for an extreme simplicity, because all else would be a life of vital desire and physical self-indulgence. But from a wider standpoint this is a mental standard based on the law of the Ignorance of which desire is the motive; to overcome the Ignorance, to delete the ego, a total rejection not only of desire but of all the things that can satisfy desire may intervene as a valid principle. But this standard or any mental standard cannot be absolute nor can it be binding as a law on the consciousness that has arisen above desire; a complete purity and self-mastery would be in the very grain of its nature and that would remain the same in poverty or in riches: for if it could be shaken or sullied by either, it would not be real or would not be complete. The one rule of the gnostic life would be the self-expression of the Spirit, the will of the Divine Being; that will, that self-expression could manifest through extreme simplicity or through extreme complexity and opulence or in their natural balance, — for beauty and plenitude, a hidden sweetness and laughter in things, a sunshine and gladness of life are also powers and expressions of the Spirit. In all directions the Spirit within determining the law of the nature would determine the frame of the life and its detail and circumstance. In all there would be the same plastic principle; a rigid standardisation, however necessary for the mind's arrangement of things, would not be the law of the

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 717.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 716-17.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

spiritual life. A great diversity and liberty of self-expression based on an underlying unity might well become manifest; but everywhere there would be harmony and truth of order."[1]

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Supramental Yoga

All Yoga done through the mind alone or through the heart or the will or the vital force or the body ends in some one aspect of the infinite and eternal Existence and rests satisfied there, as the mind imagines for ever. Not through these alone shall thy Yoga move, but through all these at once and, supremely, through that which is beyond them. And the end of thy Yoga shall be the integrality of thy entrance not into one aspect, but into all the Infinite, all the Eternal, all the Divine in all its aspects indivisibly unified together.

Whatever is beyond mind and life and body is spirit. But spirit can be realised even on these lower levels, in the spiritualised mind, in the spiritualised life-force, even in the spiritualised physical consciousness and body. But if thou rise not up beyond the mind-level, then in these realisations the spirit must needs be modified by the medium through which thou attainest to it, and its supreme truth can only be seized in a reflection, partial even in widest apparent universality, and the utmost essential integrality will escape thy seizure.

Rise rather into the supramental levels and then all the rest shall remain a part of thy experience, but wonderfully changed, transfigured by a supreme alchemy of consciousness into an element of the supramental glory. All that other Yogas can give thee, thou shalt have, but as an experience overpassed, put in its place in the Divine Whole and delivered from the inadequacy of an exclusive state or experience.

The Supramental Yoga is at once an ascent towards God and a descent of Godhead into the embodied nature.

The ascent can only be achieved by a one-centred all-gathering upward aspiration of the soul and mind and life and body; the descent can only come by a call of the whole being towards the infinite and eternal Divine. If this call and this aspiration are there, or if by any means they can be born and grow constantly and seize all the nature, then and then only a supramental uplifting and transformation becomes possible.

The call and the aspiration are only first conditions; there must be along

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), pp. 1066-67.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

with them and brought by their effective intensity an opening of all the being to the Divine and a total surrender.

This opening is a throwing wide of all the nature on all its levels and in all its parts to receive into itself without limits the greater divine Consciousness which is there already above and behind and englobing this mortal half-conscious existence.

In the receiving there must be no inability to contain, no breaking down of anything in the system, mind or life or nerve or body under the transmuting stress. There must be an endless receptivity, an always increasing capacity to bear an ever stronger and more and more insistent action of the divine Force. Otherwise nothing great or permanent can be done; the Yoga will end in a breakdown or an inert stoppage or a stultifying or a disastrous arrest in a process which must be absolute and integral if it is not to be a failure.

But since no human system has this endless receptivity and unfailing capacity, the supramental Yoga can succeed only if the Divine Force, as it descends, increases the personal power and equates the strength that receives with the Force that enters from above to work in the nature. This is only possible if there is on our part a progressive surrender of the being into the hands of the Divine; there must be a complete and never-failing assent, a willingness to let the Divine Power do with us whatever is needed for the work that has to be done.

Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man; the mental being cannot by his own unaided force change himself into a supramental spirit. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle.

For the powers of our mind, life and body are bound to their own limitations and, however high they may rise or however widely expand, they cannot rise above their natural ultimate limits or expand beyond them. But still, mental man can open to what is beyond him and call down a supramental Light, Truth and Power to work in him and do what the mind cannot do. If mind cannot by effort become what is beyond mind, Supermind can descend and transform mind into its own substance.

If the Supramental Power is allowed by man's discerning assent and vigilant surrender to act according to its own profound and subtle insight and flexible potency, it will bring about slowly or swiftly a divine transformation of our fallen and imperfect nature.

This descent, this working is not without its possibility of calamitous fall and danger. If the human mind or the vital desire seizes hold on the descending force and tries to use it according to its own limited and erring ideas or flawed and egoistic impulses, — and this is inevitable in some degree until this lower mortal has learned something of the way of that greater immortal nature, — stumblings and deviations, hard and seemingly insuperable obs-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

tacles and wounds and suffering cannot be escaped and even death or utter downfall are not impossible. Only when the conscious integral surrender to the Divine has been learned by mind and life and body, can the way of the Yoga become easy, straight, swift and safe.

And it must be a surrender and an opening to the Divine alone and to no other. For it is possible for an obscure mind or an impure life-force in us to surrender to undivine and hostile forces and even to mistake them for the Divine. There can be no more calamitous error. Therefore our surrender must be no blind and inert passivity to all influences or any influence, but sincere, conscious, vigilant, pointed to the One and the Highest alone.

Self-surrender to the divine and infinite Mother, however difficult, remains our only effective means and our sole abiding refuge, — self-surrender to her means that our nature must be an instrument in her hands, the soul a child in the arms of the Mother.

(*The Hour of God*, Cent. Ed, Vol. 17, pp. 70-72.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

11 September 1966

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THE MOTHER AND HER MISSION ON EARTH

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

"Since the beginning of the earth, wherever and whenever there was possibility of manifesting a ray of Consciousness, I was there."

THE MOTHER

"Living in the heart of each atom I kindle in it the fire that purifies and transfigures, the fire that is never extinguished."[1]

THE MOTHER

"This being is no longer anything else than an embrace of peace enveloping the whole earth, an ocean of joy overflowing all."[2]

THE MOTHER

The physical embodiment of the Mother on the earth is of profound significance for the whole world whether the world is conscious of it or not, and whether the world in its entirety will admit it or not.

WHO IS THE MOTHER?

There are many who are curious about the real identity of the Mother. In her highest being she is to us, as Sri Aurobindo says, none else than the Supreme Mother herself, the Adya Shakti, transcendent beyond and above all manifestation and at the same time immanent. It is the Divine Mother herself who has incarnated in the material body to lift up the suffering world from its original inconscience and obscurity to its divine consummation, the Light and Bliss of the Spirit. And to achieve this transformation, she is at work "to bring down something not yet expressed in this material world".[3] To personally guide humanity the Mother has to come in a physical body, but she "does not cease to be the Divine.... The Mother was inwardly above the human even in childhood,"[4] Sri Aurobindo tells us. To have a clear perception as to who the Mother is, let us go through these lines of immaculate beauty and mystic grandeur from Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*:

[1] *Prayers and Meditations of the Mother* (1948), June 2, 1914.
[2] *Ibid.*, November 21, 1914.
[3] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 49. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"She is the golden bridge, the wonderful fire.
The luminous heart of the Unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God;
She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns,
The Light that leans from the unrealised Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down."[1]

These lines can be an indication of the extraordinary Power with which the Mother has come, to bring down an altogether new principle on earth, to achieve something unique and unprecedented in the history of the earth.

Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati are but a few of her innumerable powers and personalities which she brings forward as needed for her work in the world.

Our Relation with the Mother

And what is our relation with the Mother? This has been made absolutely clear in the following lines of Sri Aurobindo, "It is a far greater relation than that of the physical mother to her child; it gives all that human motherhood can give, but in a much higher way, and it contains in itself infinitely more."[2] The Mother says also, "There is a special personal tie between you and me, between all who have turned to Sri Aurobindo's and my teaching, — it is well understood, distance does not count here.... And this tie between you and me is never cut. There are people who have long ago left the Ashram, in a state of revolt, and yet I keep myself informed of them, I attend to them. You are never abandoned. In fact, I hold myself responsible for everyone, even for those whom I have met only for one second in my life."[3] It is for us individually to get more and more conscious of this profound love, to feel her constant nearness, the sweet and marvellous Presence always enveloping us and helping and guiding us in our endeavour to exceed ourselves.

The Mother's Awareness of Her Mission from Her Very Childhood

Born and brought up in the midst of plenty, it is not for her to enjoy the riches and comforts that this life can provide; hers is to shoulder the earth's and humanity's heavy burden of sorrow and suffering.

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), p. 314.
[2] *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on The Mother* (1951), p. 95.
[3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1958, pp. 75,77.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Even in childhood, the Mother had certain experiences which were most extraordinary in their bearing and deeply spiritual at heart. At the age of thirteen and even at the age of five, she had experiences which were sufficient to indicate that she was no ordinary child, but the very embodiment of Divine Love and Compassion and Grace.

She used to record her day-to-day prayers and experiences in her diary, which has since been published in book-form, *Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*. Anyone going through this book will come to know who the Mother is, what she stands for, her purpose and mission on earth. It is replete with the gems of her various experiences and perceptions, her ardent prayers and aspirations. All her prayers are revelations. The book speaks by itself of her unique mission and her deep sacrifice for the transformation of earth and humanity.

"May something higher, nobler, truer be revealed to mankind,"[1] she prayed to the Lord, the Divine Master. Even in her young days she perceived within her that the Divine Himself would come on earth with his peace and light and harmony to effectuate a radical transformation of the dark conditions prevalent here. As we find in her diary, "I know that a day will come when Thou wilt transform all those who approach us; Thou wilt transform them so radically that, totally liberated from the ties of the past, they will begin to live in Thee with a life quite new, a life solely made of Thee, of which Thou shalt be the sovereign Lord. And also all troubles will be transformed into serenity, all anguish into peace, all doubts into certitude, all ugliness into harmony, all egoisms into self-giving, all darknesses into light and all sufferings into unchanging happiness."[2]

Her constant yearning was to be united and identified with the Supreme in His "absolute Consciousness". Her aspirations were of the highest kind. "Free from all trammels," she wrote on May 2, 1914, "I shall be Thyself; it will be Thou seeing the world through this body; it will be Thou acting in the world through this instrument." All her prayers were instinct with her heart's devotion and gratitude and her total surrender to the Supreme. In many places, we find, she completely identified herself with the Supreme Lord, achieving a total dissolution of the ego-sense, the personal 'I'. But the individual realisation and salvation, without any thought of changing the material existence was considered by her as an act of extreme egoism and cowardice. The knowledge gained by one's personal realisation should be utilised "for hastening the earthly transfiguration, for accomplishing Thy sublime work",[3] as she put it.

In an ardent prayer she implored the Divine: "Thou sovereign Master, extreme limit of our thought, who standest for us on the threshold of the Un-

[1] Prayer of November 28, 1913.
[2] Prayer of January 11, 1914.
[3] Prayer of June 15, 1913.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

known, let some new splendour surge out of that Unthinkable, some possibility of a higher and more integral realisation, so that Thy work may be accomplished and the universe may take one more step forward towards the sublime identification, the supreme manifestation."[1]

Her prayers were vibrant with her soul's aspiration to become the perfect instrument for the Divine's work on earth which she felt as her mission in life. She wrote, "Grant that I may accomplish my mission, that I may help in Thy integral manifestation."[2] The Mother wrote this even before she met Sri Aurobindo. And integral manifestation of the Divine means that in and through all the activities, in every aspect of our terrestrial life, it is the inner and secret divinity that is able to express itself integrally. We find in her diary, "It is in all states, in all modes, in all things, in all worlds, in all elements that we have to discover Thee and be united with Thee; and if we leave out one element, however small it may be, the communion cannot be perfect, the realisation cannot be accomplished."[3]

The Mother was ever awake to the work which she was to fulfil on earth; she was aware of a new manifestation in the near future, the advent of an altogether new force for the 'earthly transfiguration'. As we find in her *Prayers and Meditations*, "Let us not lose sight of the goal; grant that we may be always in union with Thy force, the force which the earth does not yet know and which Thou hast given us the mission to reveal to her."[4]

The Mother was fully aware of the dangers and difficulties and sufferings that invariably accompany a great mission, and hers was an unprecedented mission. But she was not to be affected in the least by their presence. She possessed the indomitable courage of the soul. She was ready to face any obstacle or suffering that might come in the way. She held a completely different view with regard to the existence of suffering. As we find it in her diary, "We must not run away from suffering, we must not love and cultivate it either, we must learn how to go down deep enough in it to make it a lever which will have the power to force open the doors of the eternal consciousness and enter into the serenity of Thy unvarying oneness."[5]

She often received within her heart the command of the Lord: "Turn towards the earth and men."[6] She was, in fact, methodically trained and prepared by the divine teachers from the subtle worlds for her great mission on earth "to intervene with all power in its transformations."[7] She wrote, "It seems to me that it is Thy will to make me pass successively through all the experiences that are generally put at the summit of a Yoga as its culmination and the proof of its perfect accomplishment."[8]

[1] Prayer of September 30, 1914.
[2] Prayer of March 24, 1914.
[3] Prayer of July 12, 1914.
[4] Prayer of June 26, 1914.
[5] Prayer of March 6, 1914.
[6] Prayer of December 20, 1916.
[7] Prayer of May 24, 1915.
[8] Prayer of July 31, 1914.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Her love for the ignorant earth was so intense, her compassion so profound that she prayed to the Lord: "Let me be the representative of the whole earth, so that united with my consciousness, she may give herself to Thee without reserve."[1] She totally identified herself with the whole earth including the docile animal and the modest plant along with ignorant mankind. And she prayed to the Lord, again and again, to come to its rescue. She even heard the silent voice of the Lord in her heart addressing the Earth, "Poor sorrowful Earth, remember that I am present in thee and lose not hope; each effort, each grief, each joy and each pang, each call of thy heart, each aspiration of thy soul, each renewal of thy seasons, all, all without exception, what seems to thee sorrowful and what seems to thee joyous, what seems to thee ugly and what seems to thee beautiful, all infallibly lead thee towards me, who am endless Peace, shadowless Light, perfect Harmony, Certitude, Rest and Supreme Blessedness."[2]

Gratitude which is a rare virtue in men was constant and spontaneous in her. "In the name of the earth," she said addressing the Lord, "I thank Thee for manifesting Thyself."[3]

She was aware that the Divine Love had penetrated into the very heart of Inconscience with a view to lift up Matter to its superconscient self-expression. She could hear in the silence of her being these directions of the Supreme regarding her work on earth: "Be this love in everything and everywhere, ever more widely, ever more intensely, and the whole world will become at once thy work and thy estate, thy field of action and thy conquest. Strive with persistence to throw down the last limits which are but frail barriers before the expansion of the being, to conquer the last obscurities which the illumining Power is already lighting up. Fight that thou mayst conquer and triumph; struggle to surmount all that has been up to this day, to make the new Light emerge, the new example, which the world needs. Fight stubbornly against all obstacles, outer or inner. This is the pearl without price which is proposed for thee to realise."[4]

She realised that to change this suffering world into one of divine Bliss, humanity must be transformed down to the most material. "Matter has to be vigorously churned if it is to become capable of manifesting entirely the divine light,"[5] she wrote. "The heavens have been definitely conquered and nothing and nobody has the power to take them from me. But the conquest of the earth has yet to be made,"[6] she noted in her diary. She realised that for the earthly liberation "this universal bedrock of inconscience"[7] as well as the subconscient which is "the intermediate zone between

[1] Prayer of October 10, 1914.
[2] Prayer of February 5, 1913.
[3] Prayer of December 29, 1913.
[4] Prayer of December 25, 1916.
[5] Prayer of May 26, 1914.
[6] Prayer of July 31, 1915.
[7] Prayer of February 9, 1914.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

precise perception and the total darkness of the ignorance"[1] must be conquered.

And as mankind is steeped in ignorance it is for the Divine to take the lead and clear the path. The Mother wrote, "For the accomplishment of Thy work I have sunk down into the unfathomable depths of Matter, I have touched with my finger the horror of the falsehood and the inconscience, I have reached the seat of oblivion and a supreme obscurity!"[2] It is out of a deep love and compassion for earth and humanity that she made this great sacrifice with a certitude in the ultimate victory of the Divine.

Meanwhile her individual consciousness — body, life and mind — had already undergone a great inner illumination. As she wrote, "the whole being exults in a limitless beatitude, a boundless love, a sovereign power, a perfect knowledge and an infinite consciousness.... Thus the solid foundations of Thy work upon the earth are made ready, the basements of the immense edifice are constructed,"[3] so that the earth may be ready to manifest the new Light and Consciousness when the hour strikes.

She had a clear vision of the divine destiny of the earth, but she understood that as yet it was futile to speak of ultimate truths since the earth was not yet ready to accept them. She wrote, "The future will clearly reveal them to the eyes of all, even of the most blind."[4]

The Mother perceived that mind could not be the final height of consciousness; man still so imperfect and ignorant with no mastery over himself and the outer nature could not possibly manifest the highest Divine Consciousness unless he exceeded his limited humanity and rose to inner divinity. "Man is the intermediary between That which has to be and that which is,"[5] she noted in her diary.

She was aware of the inevitable appearance of a new consciousness much higher than the mental, as well as of a species much superior to man. The Mother was sure of the "Supramental" Manifestation on earth though she might not have known it by that particular term. In fact, she could see the new Force already manifest in the subtle world so that its entry into the material world was a certainty. Even as early as July 7, 1914, she wrote, "The Force is there; it is there divinely pure, luminous, powerful; it is there as a limitless love, as a sovereign power, as an undisputed reality, as an unmixed peace, as an uninterrupted beatitude, as the supreme Benediction; it is existence in itself, the boundless felicity of the infinite knowledge... and it is something more which cannot be said, but which is already active in the higher worlds beyond thought, as the power of sovereign transfiguration, and also in the inconscient depths of Matter as the Irresistible Healer." Beyond all doubt,

[1] Prayer of March 13, 1914.
[2] Prayer of November 24, 1931.
[3] Prayer of November 3, 1914.
[4] Prayer of March 3, 1915.
[5] Prayer of August 29, 1914.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the Mother was referring to the Supramental Force and Consciousness, to its impending descent from above as well its emergence from below. Often would she implore the Divine Master, "Who will open these flood-gates still closed?"[1] "Open the closed doors, set flowing the sealed fountains."[2]

She wrote on July 22, 1914, "O Divine Master, let Thy light fall upon this chaos and a new world emerge from it. What is now preparing accomplish and let a new humanity be born which will be the perfect expression of Thy new sublime Law." Evidently she gave the hint of the appearance of superman and the emergence of a new world totally divinised, manifesting the Law of Truth.

She realised that though Nature also would automatically arrive at the same goal in the course of her gradual evolutionary unfoldment, still man could consciously accelerate "the slow and uncertain advance of the Yoga of Nature"[3] by taking recourse to spirituality or the 'divine Yoga'. "It is thus that at certain periods," wrote she, "the whole terrestrial life seems to pass miraculously through stages which, at other times, it would take thousands of years to traverse."[4]

The Mother, the Divine Collaborator of Sri Aurobindo

From the above, we find that the Mother was particularly missioned by the Supreme to work in collaboration with Sri Aurobindo. It is to accomplish exactly this work of integral manifestation by working out a total and unique transformation of the earth-nature and consciousness by bringing down the Supramental Truth-Consciousness that is Sri Aurobindo's mission upon earth.

After meeting Sri Aurobindo for the first time on March 29, 1914, the Mother at once recognised him as the Incarnation of the Lord Himself, and she wrote in her prayer the very next day, "It matters not if there are hundreds of beings plunged in the densest ignorance. He whom we saw yesterday is on earth: His presence is enough to prove that a day will come when darkness shall be transformed into light, when Thy reign shall be indeed established upon earth."

The Mother recorded in her diary on December 8, 1916 the Lord addressing her, "I have chosen thee from all eternity to be my exceptional representative upon the earth, not in an invisible and hidden way, but in a way apparent to the eyes of all men. And what thou wert created to be, thou shalt be." And we at the present day can see for ourselves the truth behind this saying.

Sri Aurobindo has said, "There is no difference between the Mother's

[1] Prayer of December 30, 1916. [2] Prayer of July 19, 1914.
[3] [4] Prayer of May 24, 1915.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

path and mine; we have and always had the same path, the path that leads to the supramental change and the divine realisation; not only at the end, but from the beginning they have been the same."[1] The Mother has told us, "Sri Aurobindo and myself are one and the same consciousness, one and the same person."[2] They are the Divine partners and collaborators to fulfil a common mission, to work out the Divine Plan on earth.

The Mother's Mission

We find in the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations*, "What Thy Will makes my mind conceive as the goal to be attained, the conquest to be realised, is only one simple element of Thy eternal plan; but in the perfect union I am this plan and this Will, and I taste the supreme bliss of the infinite, even while I play with ardour, precision, and energy, in the world of division, the special play Thou hast entrusted to me."[3]

Now, we have already seen what this special play is. The expression "special play" is extremely significant. There have been instances of individual realisation of the highest Divine Consciousness. But nobody, before Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, thought of or attempted the collective liberation by bringing down this highest Divine Consciousness — termed by Sri Aurobindo Supermind — on earth to effectuate a transformation of our life as a whole, including the divinisation of the physical substance itself, thus gaining even a physical continuance in the material world. Truly is she the supreme Mother Herself incarnated with the mission to prepare the way and hasten the descent of the Truth-Consciousness, which is a great step forward towards the ultimate goal and destiny of the terrestrial existence, the supramentalisation of earth and humanity. This is nothing short of transplanting the kingdom of heaven on earth. Here is a signal departure from the other paths of yoga where the view is held that the final liberation of the self lies only in its withdrawal from the world of activities, and its dissolution in the silent Brahman, or its extinction by Nirvana. The Mother says on the contrary, "Life on earth, we consider, is not a passage or a means merely; it must become, through transformation, a goal, a realisation."[4] Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's is the integral yoga as it embraces within its sweep the whole range of Life and Nature with the aim to transfigure it wholly.

The earth is in a turmoil. Falsehood reigns supreme. Mankind is steeped in stifling darkness. Chaos and disorder are his normal condition. The mission and endeavour of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is exactly to replace the reign of Falsehood by that of Truth.

[1] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 456.
[2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1958, p. 77.
[3] Prayer of July 31, 1915.
[4] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 80.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

This change from Falsehood to Truth, they hold, cannot be brought about by any reshuffling in the political field, any change in the social structure, or by any novel idea in man's thought-pattern, or even by any religious reform. "Ours is neither a political nor a social but a spiritual goal,"[1] says the Mother. The change must come from within. Spirituality alone offers the solution — spirituality that fulfils and does not reject life. It is only by a radical change in man's consciousness, a complete transformation of his present nature — mental, vital as well as physical — that any true and lasting change in his outer circumstances, in his way of life, is possible. The Mother says, "The conditions under which men live upon earth are the result of their state of consciousness. To seek to change conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera."[2]

According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Mind is not the last rung in the ladder of consciousness, Man is not the final product in Nature's evolutionary unfoldment. Just as Life has sprung out of Matter, and Mind out of Life, so also Mind potentially harbours in it the seed of Supermind. The manifestation of Supermind is the next inevitable outcome in Nature's evolution. Nature "endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance,"[3] said the Mother to the children of the Ashram. In fact, a new race of supermen will come into existence.

"The appearance of a new force and light and power, accompanying the descent of the supramental consciousness into this world can alone lift man out of the agony and pain and misery under which he is submerged,"[4] observes the Mother. Along with a sincere will and effort, a complete surrender to the Divine Mother is indispensable. The Grace of the Mother can alone bring about the much-needed transformation by the power of the Supramental Truth-consciousness acting in the earth-nature. "Her embodiment," says Sri Aurobindo, "is a chance for the earth-consciousness to receive the Supramental into it and to undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible."[5] The Mother is the Conscious-Force, the Shakti of the Divine, the Executrix of the Divine Plan.

The Mother Takes Charge of the Ashram

It was only after the final arrival of the Mother in Pondicherry on 24 April 1920 that the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo was formally founded. From

[1] *Words of the Mother* (1949), p. 188.
[2] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 102.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 105.
[4] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1954, pp. 101, 103.
[5] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 49.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

a handful of houses and a few inmates, it has grown into an epitome of the world, under her personal care and guidance in every sphere of life and activity.

The Mother wrote in one of her articles entitled, *A Dream*:

"There should be somewhere upon earth a place that no nation could claim as its sole property, a place where all human beings of goodwill, sincere in their aspiration, could live freely as citizens of the world, obeying one single authority, that of the supreme Truth, a place of peace, concord, harmony, where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the causes of his sufferings and miseries, to surmount his weakness and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the care for progress would get precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the seeking for material pleasures and enjoyment.... Work would not be there as the means for gaining one's livelihood, it would be the means whereby to express oneself, develop one's capacities and possibilities...

"The earth is certainly not ready to realise such an ideal....

"Yet, this dream is on the way of becoming a reality. That is exactly what we are seeking to do at the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo on a small scale, in proportion to our modest means. The achievement is indeed far from being perfect but it is progressive; little by little we advance towards our goal, which, we hope, one day we shall be able to hold before the world as a practical and effective means of coming out of the present chaos in order to be born into a more true, more harmonious new life."[1]

Sri Aurobindo Leaves His Body

Sri Aurobindo left his body on 5 December 1950. It was to hasten the collective realisation that he had to take this decision, the Mother said. And he had already made this revealing statement to her, "I shall manifest again in the first supramental body built in the supramental way."

The whole burden of responsibility of directing the Ashram and fighting with the world-forces devolved on the Mother alone. Of course, she received the silent message from Sri Aurobindo assuring her of his constant presence with us in the earth-atmosphere till his great work would be accomplished.

The Mother Opens the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education

The Mother opened "Sri Aurobindo University Centre", later renamed

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), pp. 100-101.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education." Sri Aurobindo had considered this as "one of the best means of preparing the future humanity to receive the supramental light that will transform the élite of today into a new race manifesting upon earth the new light and force and life,"[1] declared the Mother.

The Mother's view on education is that it must include the five major aspects of our existence, i.e., the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. "With the psychic education," the Mother says, "we come to the problem of the true motive of life, the reason of our existence upon earth."[2] It is through the psychic being that we come in contact with the Mother's Presence within us.

In fact, the secret of our earthly existence is contained in these words of the Mother, "If we truly want to progress and acquire the capacity of knowing the truth of our being, that is to say, the one thing for which we have been really created, that which we can call our mission upon earth, then we must, in a very regular and constant manner, reject from us or eliminate in us whatever contradicts the truth of our existence, whatever is in opposition to it."[3]

The Mother's advice to us is: "Never forget the purpose and the goal of your life. The will for the great discovery should be always there soaring over you, above what you do and what you are, like a huge bird of light dominating all the movements of your being."[4]

The Mother Opens the Flood-Gate for the Supramental Manifestation upon Earth

The Mother declared that on 29 February 1956, the Supramental Light and Force and Consciousness had entered the subtle earth atmosphere. She gave the message on that occasion:

> "A new light breaks upon the earth,
> A new world is born."

These words marked the fulfilment of what she had announced as far back as September 25, 1914, in her prayer:

> "A new light shall break upon the earth,
> A new world shall be born."

Four years later, on 29 February 1960, the Mother gave another mes-

[1] The Mother's speech at the Sri Aurobindo Memorial Convention held on 24 April 1951.
[2] *Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on Education* (1966), p. 73.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 49. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

sage describing the way the Supramental Manifestation had taken place — in fact, it had been for the Mother to usher it in — on 29 February 1956 — during the collective meditation:

"This evening the Divine Presence, concrete and material, was there present amongst you. I had a form of living gold, bigger than the universe, and I was facing a huge and massive golden door which separated the world from the Divine.

"As I looked at the door, I knew and willed, in a single movement of consciousness, that '*the time has come*', and lifting with both hands a mighty golden hammer I struck one blow, one single blow on the door and the door was shattered to pieces.

"Then the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow."

So it was for the Mother to "open the closed door, to set flowing the sealed fountains" of the Supramental splendours. Without her personal intervention the earth would have had to wait perhaps indefinitely for this new manifestation.

And though as yet its action is not much perceptible on the surface, "one day will come," says the Mother, "when the most blind, the most unconscious, even the most unwilling shall be obliged to recognise it."[1] The Supramental Force is at work in full swing, so much so that it prompted the Mother to say as early as 1958, "If things continue to move at this speed, it is more than possible, it is almost evident that what Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter would be a prophetic announcement: 'The supramental consciousness will enter into a phase of realising power in 1967.' "[2]

The Supramental World, Earth and the Intermediary Zone

As to how the new supramental world exists and what the relation is between it and our earth, the Mother graphically describes it from the clear and vivid experience which she had on February 3, 1958, lasting for one hour. She says, "The supramental world exists permanently and I am there permanently in a supramental body. I had the proof of this today when my earth consciousness went there and remained there consciously between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Now I know that for the two worlds to meet in a constant and conscious relation what is missing is an intermediary zone between the physical world as it is and the supramental world as it is. It is this zone both in the individual consciousness and in the objective world that remains to be built and is being built. When I spoke before of the new world

[1] The Mother's message of 24.4.1956. [2] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958, p.87.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

that is being created it is this intermediary zone that I meant. In the same way when I am on this side, that is to say, under the dominance of the physical consciousness, and as I see the supramental power, the supramental light and substance constantly penetrating the matter, it is the construction of this zone that I see and I take my part in it."[1] Towards the end of the description of her experience the Mother remarks, "The experience of the other day (3rd February) has been revelatory to me, I came out of it completely changed. I understood suddenly a lot of things of the past, actions and portions of my life that had remained inexplicable."[2]

On 13 November 1958, the Mother had another experience. While describing it she says, "Just the moment is now come in the history of the universe when that link can be established."[3]

Viewed from the supramental world, our world appears to be quite foreign and artificial, the Mother tells us. There is a complete change in the values of life. The Supreme Himself appears to be altogether dissimilar in the two worlds (though in both cases, the Mother was in contact with the Supreme). There is a radical difference in the very quality of consciousness and of experience.

A complete reversal of consciousness takes place when one begins to live the spiritual life; a new and far greater reversal of consciousness takes place when one enters the supramental world, the Mother tells us. Her story runs thus (from her experience of 13.11.1958), "It is as if our entire spiritual life were made of silver whereas the supramental is made of gold, as if the whole spiritual life here below were a vibration of silver, not gold, but merely a light, a light that goes up to the summit, a light altogether pure, pure and intense, but in the other one, the supramental, there is a richness and a power that makes all the difference."[4]

Now since an intermediary zone is indispensable for constituting a kind of bridge between the physical world and the supramental world, it naturally follows that there is sure to appear an intermediary species to act as a link between the mental being and the supramental being. In fact, the new race of supermen of which the Mother has already spoken before will constitute the intermediary species which has still an animal origin but which in its consciousness will have "active relation with the new world of supramental realisation." The Mother says, "This species [the new race of supermen] may be considered as a species of transition, because it will discover, as it is to be foreseen, the means of creating new beings without passing through the old animal method, and it is these beings, having truly a spiritual birth, that will form the elements of the new race, the supramental race."[5]

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1958, pp. 79,81. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1959, p. 65.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 67. [5] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1958, p. 85.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Sri Aurobindo has told us," the Mother says, "that in the supramental itself there are different planes of realisation and these planes will manifest successively in the same progressive movement that has always guided universal evolution."[1] But she tells us that till now the creation has been based on Ignorance and Inconscience; whereas the basis of the supramental creation will be Truth and a spontaneous Knowledge. This marks the essential difference between our world as it is and the supramental world. In fact, it will be altogether a new world of Truth and Light and Knowledge. Life and existence as a whole will be a harmonious expression of the Divine Unity manifesting in the world. When the supramental world will be well organised it is the Spirit which will be the Master of the whole manifestation consciously and naturally.

We further learn from what the Mother tells us that the supramental action will be done by the conscious will of the soul working directly from the "centre of spiritual will upon Matter" without the intervention of the mind. Generally, human beings decide to do something, think it out, plan to do a particular action and then execute it. "Whereas," says the Mother, "the supramental action is decided by leaping over the mind; passing through the mind is not necessary, it is direct.... The mind is a motionless zone for transmission."[2]

Time Needed for the New Manifestation to become Tangible

Now to have an idea regarding the full manifestation of the supramental world and the race of supermen. In Nature everything in each phase takes place step by step; nothing happens by a sudden miracle (there may be a very few exceptions). The Mother says that after the manifestation of mind in the earthly atmosphere it took one million years for the first man to appear on earth. So, according to her, it will of course not be too much if a few thousand years pass for the superman to make his first appearance on earth.

For an extraordinary achievement of such magnitude to stabilise itself tangibly in a still shorter span of time will depend upon a state of a concentrated aspiration, a total surrender to the Divine, an inner plasticity and a perfect receptivity on the part of humanity; but this is yet a far cry. "By the resistance that one meets in his own being, everyone can measure the tremendous resistance that the world offers to the work of the Grace,"[3] observes the Mother. In fact, the supramental transformation, she remarks, "will happen in a visible manner only when the inner states of being have already been considerably transformed. It would be therefore quite unreasonable to try to

[1] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, November 1957, p. 33.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1962, p. 77.
[3] *Ibid.*, April 1959, p. 79.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

judge the presence of the supramental by physical appearances. The physical is the last to change and the supramental force can be at work in a being long before something of it becomes perceptible in the life of the body."[1]

The Manifestation of the Supreme Love Can Alone Achieve the Miracle

In fact, it is the descent and manifestation of the Supreme Love that alone can effectuate the final transfiguration. But as yet the earth and humanity are not plastic and receptive enough to bear the Divine Love in its original purity and plenitude. This love is covertly brooding above, constantly helping us as much as it is possible in the form of Grace, the Mother tells us. "As it is all-powerful, some receptivity must be prepared upon earth so that the effects may not be shattering,"[2] observes the Mother.

Thus it is not possible for the Mother to bring down some of her rarer Powers and Personalities to work in the earth-nature, as we learn from the writings of Sri Aurobindo. "There are among them Presences," writes Sri Aurobindo, "indispensable for the supramental realisation, — most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe."[3] To quote the Mother, "When the day will come for the manifestation of the supreme Love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of the supreme Love, that will indeed be the moment of Transformation. Because nothing will be able to resist That."[4]

All the same, the evolutionary Force goes on unrolling itself ever forward; and the Mother goes on with her work of preparing the earth and humanity and hastening the evolutionary process with her supramental power till the supreme consummation is reached. And the world in mute expectancy awaits the dawn of that moment when the creation will move from light to greater Light, from joy to diviner Joy, in the sweet cadences of Harmony and Peace, towards the realisation of a yet fuller perfection, the Divine Life in a Divine Body here on earth.

[1] *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education* (1966), p. 79.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1961, p. 91.
[3] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), pp. 35-36.
[4] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1961, p. 91.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

The Present Age — the Most Memorable

We are most fortunate to be born in a period, the most memorable in the earth's history, when the Divine Mother Herself is present in our midst, personally guiding the earthly destiny, and the world has passed over from the Mental to the Supramental epoch. The Mother says that all those who are living on the earth at this time automatically inhale and imbibe the supramental substance which is fast spreading and precipitating in the terrestrial atmosphere. "To say the truth," she announces, "just now there is upon earth an opportunity which presents itself only after thousands of years, a conscious help with the necessary power."[1]

The Earth, India and the West

Her presence in a small corner of the globe is enough to turn the tide of events and forces for hastening the Divine's victory on all fronts. Her presence particularly in India has a special importance.

"From the astronomical point of view," the Mother remarks, "the earth is nothing, it is a very small accident. From the spiritual point of view it is a willed symbolic formation."[2] "In the whole creation, the earth has a place of distinction, because unlike any other planet, it is evolutionary with a psychic entity at its centre. In it, India, in particular, is a divinely chosen country. It is India that can bring Truth in the world," observes the Mother. Significantly enough, the Mother remarked after she visited India for the first time, "I felt that India is my true country, the country of my soul and spirit."[3]

The Mother's choice of being born in the midst of a materialist culture and civilisation may be to make it easier for the Westerners to approach the Divine; it may also be to facilitate a happy blending of the cultures of the East and the West, to bring about the unity and harmony inherent in Spirit and Matter. The Mother's work is with the whole of earth and humanity, with the creation in its entirety. In a message to America, she said, "Stop thinking that you are of the West and others of the East. All human beings are of the same divine origin and meant to manifest upon earth the unity of this origin." Sri Aurobindo also said at the same time, "There is a common hope, a common destiny, both spiritual and material, for which both are needed as coworkers."[4] After all, Matter is only a projection, the outer expression of the Spirit.

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1959, p. 89.
[2] *Ibid.*, November 1965, p. 41.
[3] The Mother's declaration of August 15, 1954.
[4] *On Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 414.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Conclusion

If we aspire to be true children of the Divine Mother, we should try in all sincerity to express nothing but the inherent truth of our being in all our thoughts and activities, in all our ways and movements, to be at the service of the Truth alone, to be what the Mother wants us to be.

Let our aspiration rise in a flaming ardour to the Mother, in her own words:

> "Fill our hearts with the delight of Thy love.
> Flood our minds with the splendour of Thy light.
> Grant that we may manifest Thy Victory!"[1]

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Master's Way of Working

"The Master of our works respects our nature even when he is transforming it; he works always through the nature and not by any arbitrary caprice. This imperfect nature of ours contains the materials of our perfection, but inchoate, distorted, misplaced, thrown together in disorder or a poor imperfect order. All this material has to be patiently perfected, purified, reorganised, new-moulded and transformed, not hacked and hewn and slain or mutilated, not obliterated by simple coercion and denial. This world and we who live in it are his creation and manifestation, and he deals with it and us in a way our narrow and ignorant mind cannot understand unless it falls silent and opens to a divine knowledge. In our errors is the substance of a truth which labours to reveal its meaning to our groping intelligence. The human intellect cuts out the error and the truth with it and replaces it by another half-truth half-error; but the Divine Wisdom suffers our mistakes to continue until we are able to arrive at the truth hidden and protected under every false cover. Our sins are the misdirected steps of a seeking Power that aims, not at sin, but at perfection, at something that we might call a divine virtue. Often they are the veils of a quality that has to be transformed and delivered out of this ugly disguise: otherwise, in the perfect providence of things, they would not have been suffered to exist or to continue. The Master of our works is neither a blunderer nor an indifferent witness nor a dallier with the luxury of unneeded evils. He is wiser than our reason and wiser than our virtue.

[1] *Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*, June 19, 1914.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Our nature is not only mistaken in will and ignorant in knowledge but weak in power; but the Divine Force is there and will lead us if we trust in it and will use our deficiencies and our powers for the divine purpose. If we fail in our immediate aim, it is because he has intended the failure; often our failure or ill-result is the right road to a truer issue than an immediate and complete success would have put in our reach. If we suffer, it is because something in us has to be prepared for a rarer possibility of delight. If we stumble, it is to learn in the end the secret of a more perfect walking. Let us not be in too furious a haste to acquire even peace, purity and perfection. Peace must be ours, but not the peace of an empty or devastated nature or of slain or mutilated capacities incapable of unrest because we have made them incapable of intensity and fire and force. Purity must be our aim, but not the purity of a void or of a bleak and rigid coldness. Perfection is demanded of us, but not the perfection that can exist only by confining its scope within narrow limits or putting an arbitrary full stop to the ever self-extending scroll of the Infinite. Our object is to change into the divine nature, but the divine nature is not a mental or moral but a spiritual condition, difficult to achieve, difficult even to conceive by our intelligence. The Master of our work and our Yoga knows the thing to be done, and we must allow him to do it in us by his own means and in his own manner.

"The movement of the Ignorance is egoistic at its core and nothing is more difficult for us than to get rid of egoism while yet we admit personality and adhere to action in the half-light and half-force of our unfinished nature. It is easier to starve the ego by renouncing the impulse to act or to kill it by cutting away from us all movement of personality. It is easier to exalt it into self-forgetfulness immersed in a trance of peace or an ecstasy of divine Love. But our more difficult problem is to liberate the true Person and attain to a divine manhood which shall be the pure vessel of a divine force and the perfect instrument of a divine action. Step after step has to be firmly taken; difficulty after difficulty has to be entirely experienced and entirely mastered. Only the Divine Wisdom and Power can do this for us and it will do all if we yield to it in an entire faith and follow and assent to its workings with a constant courage and patience."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 233-35.)

*
**

"All pessimism is... a denial of the Spirit, of its fullness and power, an impatience with the ways of God in the world, an insufficient faith in the divine Wisdom and Will that created the world and for ever guide it. It admits a wrong notion about that supreme Wisdom and Power and therefore

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

cannot itself be the supreme wisdom and power of the spirit to which the world can look for guidance and for the uplifting of its whole life towards the Divine."

(*The Human Cycle*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 15, p. 168.)

*
**

The Supramental Perfection

I. THE SUPRAMENTAL LOVE

"There in the supramental Gnosis is the fulfilment, the culminating height, the all-embracing extent of the inner adoration, the profound and integral union, the flaming wings of Love upbearing the power and joy of a supreme Knowledge. For supramental Love brings an active ecstasy that surpasses the void passive peace and stillness which is the heaven of the liberated Mind and does not betray the deeper greater calm which is the beginning of the supramental silence. The unity of a love which is able to include in itself all differences without being diminished or abrogated by their present limitations and apparent dissonances is raised to its full potentiality on the supramental level. For there an intense oneness with all creatures founded on a profound oneness of the soul with the Divine can harmonise with a play of relations that only makes the oneness more perfect and absolute. The power of Love supramentalised can take hold of all living relations without hesitation or danger and turn them Godwards delivered from their crude, mixed and petty human settings and sublimated into the happy material of a divine life. For it is the very nature of the supramental experience that it can perpetuate the play of difference without forfeiting or in the least diminishing either the divine union or the infinite oneness. For a supramentalised consciousness it would be utterly possible to embrace all contacts with men and the world in a purified flame-force and with a transfigured significance, because the soul would then perceive always as the object of all emotion and all seeking for love or beauty the One Eternal and could spiritually use a wide and liberated life-urge to meet and join with that One Divine in all things and all creatures."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 158-59.)

II. THE SUPRAMENTAL POWER

"The Supramental Consciousness is not only a Knowledge, a Bliss, an

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

intimate Love and Oneness, it is also a Will, a principle of Power and Force, and it cannot descend till the element of Will, of Power, of Force in this manifested Nature is sufficiently developed and sublimated to receive and bear it. But Will, Power, Force are the native substance of the Life-Energy, and herein lies the justification for the refusal of Life to acknowledge the supremacy of Knowledge and Love alone, — for its push towards the satisfaction of something far more unreflecting, headstrong and dangerous that can yet venture too in its own bold and ardent way towards the Divine and Absolute. Love and Wisdom are not the only aspects of the Divine, there is also its aspect of Power. As the mind gropes for Knowledge, as the heart feels out for Love, so the life-force, however fumblingly or trepidantly, stumbles in search of Power and the control given by Power. It is a mistake of the ethical or religious mind to condemn Power as in itself a thing not to be accepted or sought after because naturally corrupting and evil; in spite of its apparent justification by a majority of instances, this is at its core a blind and irrational prejudice. However corrupted and misused, as Love and Knowledge too are corrupted and misused, Power is divine and put here for a divine use. Shakti, Will, Power is the driver of the worlds and, whether it be Knowledge-Force or Love-Force or Life-Force or Action-Force or Body-Force, is always spiritual in its origin and divine in its character. It is the use of it made in the Ignorance by brute, man or Titan that has to be cast aside and replaced by its greater natural — even if to us supernormal — action led by an inner consciousness which is in tune with the Infinite and the Eternal. The integral Yoga cannot reject the works of Life and be satisfied with an inward experience only; it has to go inward in order to change the outward, making the Life-Force a part and a working of a Yoga-Energy which is in touch with the Divine and divine in its guidance."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 163-64.)

III. THE SUPRAMENTAL ACTION

"The perfect supramental action will not follow any single principle or limited rule. It is not likely to satisfy the standard either of the individual egoist or of any organised group-mind. It will conform to the demand neither of the positive practical man of the world nor of the formal moralist nor of the patriot nor of the sentimental philanthropist nor of the idealising philosopher. It will proceed by a spontaneous outflowing from the summits in the totality of an illumined and uplifted being, will and knowledge and not by the selected, calculated and standardised action which is all that the intellectual reason or ethical will can achieve. Its sole aim will be the expression

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of the divine in us and the keeping together of the world and its progress towards the Manifestation that is to be. This even will not be so much an aim and purpose as a spontaneous law of the being and an intuitive determination of the action by the Light of the divine Truth and its automatic influence. It will proceed like the action of Nature from a total will and knowledge behind her, but a will and knowledge enlightened in a conscious supreme Nature and no longer obscure in his ignorant Prakriti. It will be an action not bound by the dualities but full and large in the spirit's impartial joy of existence. The happy and inspired movement of a divine Power and Wisdom guiding and impelling us will replace the perplexities and stumblings of the suffering and ignorant ego.

"If by some miracle of divine intervention all mankind at once could be raised to this level, we should have something on earth like the Golden Age of the traditions, Satya Yuga, the Age of Truth or true existence. For the sign of the Satya Yuga is that the Law is spontaneous and conscious in each creature and does its own works in a perfect harmony and freedom. Unity and universality, not separative division, would be the foundation of the consciousness of the race; love would be absolute; equality would be consistent with hierarchy and perfect in difference; absolute justice would be secured by the spontaneous action of the being in harmony with the truth of things and the truth of himself and others and therefore sure of true and right result; right reason, no longer mental but supramental, would be satisfied not by the observation of artificial standards but by the free automatic perception of right relations and their inevitable execution in the act. The quarrel between the individual and society or disastrous struggle between one community and another could not exist: the cosmic consciousness imbedded in embodied beings would assure a harmonious diversity in oneness.

"In the actual state of humanity, it is the individual who must climb to this height as a pioneer and precursor. His isolation will necessarily give determination and a form to his outward activities that must be quite other than those of a consciously divine collective action. The inner state, the root of his acts, will be the same; but the acts themselves may be very different from what they would be on an earth liberated from ignorance. Nevertheless his consciousness and the divine mechanism of his conduct, if such a word can be used of so free a thing, would be such as has been described, free from that subjection to vital impurity and desire and wrong impulse which we call sin, unbound by that rule of prescribed moral formulas which we call virtue, spontaneously sure and pure and perfect in a greater consciousness than the mind's, governed in all its steps by the light and truth of the Spirit. But if a collectivity or group could be formed of those who have reached the supramental perfection, there indeed some divine creation could take shape; a new earth could descend that would be a new heaven, a world of supramental

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

light could be created here amidst the receding darkness of this terrestrial ignorance."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 194-96.)

IV. THE SUPRAMENTAL STATE

"For there in that supramental state the whole position of things is reversed. The mind is a thing that dwells in diffusion, in succession; it can only concentrate on one thing at a time and when not concentrated runs from one thing to another very much at random. Therefore it has to concentrate on a single idea, a single subject of meditation, a single object of contemplation, a single object of will in order to possess or master it, and this it must do to at least the temporary exclusion of all others. But that which is beyond the mind and into which we seek to rise is superior to the running process of the thought, superior to the division of ideas. The Divine is centred in itself and when it throws out ideas and activities does not divide itself or imprison itself in them, but holds them and their movement in its infinity; undivided, its whole self is behind each Idea and each movement and at the same time behind all of them together. Held by it, each spontaneously works itself out, not through a separate act of will, but by the general force of consciousness behind it; if to us there seems to be a concentration of divine Will and Knowledge in each, it is a multiple and equal and not an exclusive concentration, and the reality of it is rather a free and spontaneous working in a self-gathered unity and infinity. The soul which has risen to the divine Samadhi participates in the measure of its attainment in this reversed condition of things, — the true condition, for that which is the reverse of our mentality is the truth. It is for this reason that, as is said in the ancient books, the man who has arrived at Self-possession attains spontaneously without the need of concentration in thought and effort the knowledge or the result which the Idea or the Will in him moves out to embrace."

(*Ibid.*, p. 308.)

V. BEYOND WORD, ABOVE THOUGHT

"Not only must we give up the ordinary attitude to the world and life to which the unawakened mind clings as its natural element; but we must not remain bound in any mental construction of our own or in any intellectual thought-system or arrangement of religious dogmas or logical conclusions; we must not only cut asunder the snare of the mind and the senses, but flee also beyond the snare of the thinker, the snare of the theologian and the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

church-builder, the meshes of the Word and the bondage of the Idea. All these are within us waiting to wall in the spirit with forms; but we must always go beyond, always renounce the lesser for the greater, the finite for the Infinite; we must be prepared to proceed from illumination to illumination, from experience to experience, from soul-state to soul-state so as to reach the utmost transcendence of the Divine and its utmost universality. Nor must we attach ourselves even to the truths we hold most securely, for they are but forms and expressions of the Ineffable who refuses to limit himself to any form or expression; always we must keep ourselves open to the higher Word from above that does not confine itself to its own sense and the light of the Thought that carries in it its own opposites."

(*The Synthesis of Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 20, pp. 315-16.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

10 September 1967

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE:

"To break away from the old traditions and not to obey the old rules is good — but on condition that one discovers in oneself a higher and a truer consciousness which manifests Harmony, Peace, Beauty and a superior Order, vast and progressive."

26.8.1967

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

WHAT IS DEATH?

SPEECH BY MANJULA SEN

"I, Death, am the gate of immortality." [1]

SRI AUROBINDO

"Our life's repose is in the Infinite;
It cannot end, its end is Life supreme.
Death is a passage, not the goal of our walk." [2]

SRI AUROBINDO

"The embodied soul casts away old and takes up new bodies as a man changes worn-out raiment for new." [3]

GITA

The phenomenon of death is shrouded in the most inscrutable mystery of life, and is perhaps very deeply embedded in the first mysterious beginning of creation itself, and to unveil it we have to become aware of the profoundest mystery underlying our own self as well. In fact, these three mysterious phenomena are closely interlinked and have the same source.

Now, it is an intricate job to depict the true picture of Death, the Lord of 'the inconscient Void', the king in 'the home of everlasting Night' guarding 'the secrecy of Nothingness'.

One factor which is clear enough is that life and death are interwoven; they seem to be constant companions, — death the very shadow of life. Whenever a life is born death follows at its heels.

The questions that naturally suggest themselves to the enquiring mind are: why is death inevitable? what lies on the other side of death? is there any life beyond death? can one ever return from the realm of death? and so on.

It is possible perhaps only for the mystics and occultists to explore the region of death in order to unravel its mysteries which will perhaps, at the same time, throw a flood of light revealing the mysteries of life as well.

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), p. 647.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 28), p. 197.
[3] *Gita*, Ch. II, Verse 22. Translation from *The Message of the Gita* (1946), edited by A. B. Roy, p. 20.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Origin of Death

"A Truth supreme has forced the world to be;
It has wrapped itself in Matter as in a shroud,
A shroud of Death, a shroud of Ignorance." [1]

"And one who loves in us came veiled by death." [2]

Let us state here in brief something about the origin of death as narrated by the Mother in the form of a story.

The Supreme in his infinite Delight of Being willed to objectify himself so as to find him outside himself. And he sent out of himself four emanations in the form of Consciousness, Life, Love and Truth giving them full freedom to create. Whatever is contained potentially in the Supreme must be manifested in his creation also.

After being separated from the Origin each one wanted to be free and work independently, denying even the Supreme from whom they had originated. In this way the Ego was born, and each one of the four emanations was changed into its opposite. Thus, Consciousness was turned into Unconsciousness, Love into Pain, Truth into Falsehood, and Life into Death. And the creation proceeded in utmost chaos and disorder. The whole existence became an interminable ocean of dark Inconscience where the four antagonists of the Supreme had their full sway.

Seeing this horrible and miserable state of affairs, the Supreme himself, in infinite love and compassion, plunged into the obscure depths of the Inconscient with his sovereign power to save the creation, and transform the four Powers into their original states.

And slowly he awakes from the sleep of unconsciousness so that his Presence is there even behind the atom though vaguely. It is consciously there in the developed human being in the form of a well-formed psychic being.

So, the origin of these Beings of darkness is in the Supreme himself. The Mother tells us, "They were four. The first one has been converted, another is dissolved into its origin. Two are still living and these two are more stubborn than all the others. One is known in occultism as the 'Lord of Falsehood', I have told you, the other is the 'Lord of Death'. And as long as these two beings exist, there will be difficulties."[3]

Life Versus Death

"All here is a mystery of contraries:
Darkness a magic of self-hidden light,

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), p. 658. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 594.
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1965, p. 71.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Suffering some secret rapture's tragic mask
And death an instrument of perpetual life."[1]

What is death after all? Well, to understand this in its fullest implication it is necessary to know something about what life is. Are life and death opposed to each other, one a world of light and air and the other a dungeon of stifling darkness?

Now, Reality is one; it is the One with its fourfold aspects of Existence, Consciousness-Force, Bliss and Supermind. These four ultimate aspects became in the cosmic manifestation, Matter, Life, Psyche and Mind.

"Essentially it [Life] is a form of the one cosmic Energy, a dynamic movement or current of it positive and negative, a constant act or play of the Force which builds up forms, energises them by a continual stream of stimulation and maintains them by an unceasing process of disintegration and renewal of their substance."[2] Life is the final form of Conscious-Force in its descent, and constitutes the link between Matter and Mind, a medium of "transition from inconscience to consciousness". The same Life-Force that lies dormant in inanimate objects including the atom goes on pulsating in the plants, animals and human beings. The difference lies only in its organisation and outer expression in the different grades of existence. So, pervading the whole universe there is only one Life principle, the All-Life. There is no separate principle of death. In fact, death, dissolution and rebirth are all included in the All-Life. Death is just the negative aspect of Life. The transient lives are the waking hours while the intervals of death the periods of sleep and rest in the continual life of the soul in its euolutionary development. Death is nothing but a step, a necessary passage in the continuous flow of Life which is eternal. So, life and death are in fact complementary. Sri Aurobindo writes, "Death has no reality except as a process of life. Disintegration of substance and renewal of substance, maintenance of form and change of form are the constant process of life; death is merely a rapid disintegration subservient to life's necessity of change and variation of formal experience."[3]

The Necessity and Significance of Death

"Death is the question Nature puts continually to Life and her reminder to it that it has not yet found itself. If there were no siege of death, the creature would be bound for ever in the form of an imperfect living. Pursued by death he awakes to the idea of perfect life and seeks out its means and its possibility."[4]

[1] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), p. 600.
[2] [3] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 176.
[4] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 386.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Why after all do we come here into life? It is to progressively transform the lower nature and consciousness of our ego-self (including a mastery over our physical body and physical circumstances), born out of the material inconscience, by the pressure and influence of our psychic being from within and the spirit from above so that ultimately our ordinary ignorant self may be completely transfigured and fully express the Divine Consciousness down to the most material.

The multifarious experiences on different lines which a psychic being has to go through for attaining its full maturity are not possible during the course of one lifetime, because the consciousness — mental, vital and physical — does not change so easily to express fully the secret divinity that seeks to manifest itself. It is almost impossible to get the co-ordination of the divergent elements in an individual. And by the time a very little has been achieved the material stuff that is the physical body is already far on its way to decay and disability. The bodily form, because of its hardness and fixity, cannot be changed at will to suit the needs of the evolving Spirit. Hence a change of form as well as a change of personality, that is, the instrumental nature, is indispensable. And this change can be effected only through dissolution of the body by death. "Yet if we could infuse into this matter sufficient consciousness so that its rhythm of growth falls in line with that of the subtler parts of the being and if it becomes plastic enough to follow the inner progress, then the rupture of the equilibrium would not occur and death would no longer be a necessity."[1]

Death, being a passage from one life to another, cannot be an end in itself. It constitutes, so to say, the chain linking the series of lives that a soul formulates for its gradual growth and development from a mere spark to a fully conscious being. So we find that death is an aid to life, bridging the gulfs in the eternal progression of life of the pilgrim soul.

> "Death is a stair, a door, a stumbling stride
> The soul must take to cross from birth to birth,
> A grey defeat pregnant with victory,
> A whip to lash us towards our deathless state."[2]

It is interesting to note this significant remark of the Mother regarding the presence of death: "Along with this [death] there is in the cells an intensity of the call for a Power of Eternity which would not be there but for this constant menace. Then one understands, one begins to feel in quite a concrete manner that all these things are only ways of intensifying the Manifestation, making it more and more perfect."[3]

[1] The Mother, *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1957, p. 83.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), pp. 600-601.
[3] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, August 1963, p. 47.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Death and After-Death

"Finite bodies have an end, but that which possesses and uses the body, is infinite, illimitable, eternal, indestructible."[1]

What is it that actually dies? Here we shall have to know what are the constituent parts of an individual.

Essentially, each individual is a soul that in its terrestrial evolution becomes a psychic being, our central being which lies in the inmost depth of our nature, and which grows and develops from life to life till it comes to its full maturity, that is, becomes a fully conscious being.

Then, we have an inner being comprised of the inner mental, the inner vital and the subtle physical sheaths. And lastly, we have the surface being which is our normal ego-self made up of the outer mental, vital and gross physical sheaths.

Now, the secret of the whole thing, whether it is life or death or rebirth, is the inmost Spirit, our soul or the psychic being. The events and circumstances of life and death, favourable as well as adverse, have their importance only in so far as they are the occasions for the growing manifestation of the secret soul.

When the psychic being has gathered all the experiences needed and possible during one lifetime and when it finds that a particular form and instrument will no longer be suitable for further progress, it seeks to discard the form — through illness or sudden death or accident or somehow, — and in a final effort severs one by one all the knots connecting the subtle body with the gross body and goes out and, as life ebbs away completely from each cell, the body which forms the outermost crust of our real Self dies. "It is the subtle or psychical frame which is tied to the physical by the heart-strings, by the cords of life-force, of nervous energy which have been woven into every physical fibre. This the Lord of the body draws out and the violent snapping or the rapid or tardy loosening of the life-cords, the exit of the connecting force constitutes the pain of death and its difficulty."[2]

What then happens to our real Self, disembodied? Or in other words, what lies on the other side of death?

Now, behind and above our physical universe lies the supraphysical domain. There exist many more worlds of much bigger dimension and ever increasing subtlety. The higher or the deeper the world, the greater is its extension since the substance becomes more and more rarefied and ethereal. And each plane of existence is inhabited by the beings proper to that world,

[1] *Gita*, Chap. II, Verse 18. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by A. B. Roy, p. 19.

[2] *The Problem of Rebirth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 93.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

and made up of the substance of that particular world just as we of the material world are made up basically of the physical substance.

Since we are not able to look into the subtle worlds with our physical sense-organs we generally tend to look upon those realms as pertaining to death. But the occultists and mystics who have methodically trained their subtle senses can easily visualise the conditions of the subtle worlds just as they see the physical world. To them death does not constitute a line of demarcation between this world and the other world. It is to them only a change-over from one state of being to another, from the world of material density to the subtler regions of existence, causing no break in the continuous process of life of the soul. The Mother remarks, "There is really nothing like death. There is only an appearance, an appearance based on a limited view. But there is no radical change in the vibration of the consciousness... the importance given to the difference of condition is only a superficial importance, based upon the ignorance of the phenomenon in itself. One who is able to maintain a means of communication, could say that for himself it makes no considerable difference."[1]

Nothing is totally extinct or lost by death; only the form changes. The material stuff gets dissolved into the earth-elements. Leaving the gross body, the soul goes to the subtle physical plane and drops the subtle physical sheath which forthwith gets dissolved there.

From there the soul goes to the vital or life plane. Here the being has to confront the most difficult and dangerous ordeal in its journey to the final place of rest. The desires and ambitions, the disappointments and frustrations of one's life constitute so many obstacles that cling to the disembodied being and impede the forward march of the soul. Only the Guru can help the being out of this condition.

Ordinarily, people have a conception of sin and virtue in life which leads to hell or heaven after death. Now, there are people who are too much preoccupied with worldly things, with ordinary pleasures and comforts of life, seeking everywhere to achieve their selfish ends, having very little or no thought of their inner progress, and going at times to the extent of even denying the presence of a soul. These people may get badly entangled (due to their karma) in the domain of the vital and can be said to pass through hell; to them death appears to be very dark and full of suffering. There are others again who are more concerned with living in their deeper self, and viewing every happening, more or less, in the light of their true self, and who have been able, to a great extent, to acquire the inner states of egolessness, desirelessness and equanimity, and in whom the psychic being is awake and in front. They have a comparatively easy and quick passage through the luminous and happy regions of the vital world which can be called heavens; and

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, April 1967, p. 37.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

they find the visage of death luminous and beautiful. Of course, the conception of hell and heaven is no inexorable law ruling the realm of death. One normally goes through suffering and happiness in life itself. The soul does not have to wait till death to go through these experiences.

After leaving the vital sheath, the soul goes to the mind plane and, leaving the mental sheath there, goes straight to the psychic world for final rest, and for assimilation of the essence of all its experiences of life before venturing on its next incarnation, wearing a new form and equipped with new instruments for getting new experiences in its ever ascending journey for fuller self-discovery and self-expression, till it stands completely manifest in all its splendour and perfection of being in and through the instrumental nature.

So we see that there can be no question of death with regard to our true being or Self — that which we are primarily and essentially.

"It [soul] is not slain with the slaying of the body."[1]

Fear of Death and the Methods of Conquering it

"What is this then thou callest death? Can God die? O thou who fearest death, it is Life that has come to thee sporting with a death-head and wearing a mask of terror."[2]

People are generally scared of death. They have a vague and instinctive fear that death means a termination of their life and existence as a whole, that it is full of grim foreboding drawing a thick veil of everlasting darkness separating them for ever from the world of the living and that the loss caused thereby is irreparable. "Of all kinds of fear the most subtle and the most clinging is the fear of death",[3] says the Mother. And she has chalked out four methods for getting over this fear of death.

First, the method of reason. This is particularly suitable for the intellectuals. Knowing that death is inevitable in the present condition of the world, one should remain calm and act one's best without thinking about death.

Second, the method of introspection which applies to the emotional people. One should quietly concentrate and go down deep within. In the silence of the depth there burns the steady flame of psychic consciousness which is immortal. And one who comes in contact with this flame independent of the body cannot be touched by the fear of death.

[1] *Gita*, Chap. II, Verse 20. Translation from *The Message of the Gita*, edited by A. B. Roy.
[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 124.
[3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, February 1954, p. 65.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Third, the method for those who have faith in God. They totally surrender and consecrate themselves to God, to His love and protection. And all the eventualities of life they can accept with calm equanimity. They accept every happening as the Will of God meant for their good. There can be no question of fear or anxiety or trouble.

Fourth, the method of war. It is meant for those who are bold and courageous, having an indomitable spirit to conquer death since they consider immortality to be their birthright. The battle is to be fought on many fronts: in the mind, in the feelings, in the sensations, and the most deadly battle in the material.

The Mother says that there is yet another method which is to consciously enter into the domain of death while remaining in the earthly life, and to come back again into the physical body and go on in life with full knowledge gained thereby. It is possible only for a mystic to try this method.

"O Death, our masked friend and maker of opportunities, when thou wouldst open the gate, hesitate not to tell us beforehand; for we are not of those who are shaken by its iron jarring."[1]

Is Death the Way to Peace?

To some who feel bored with life, who are too overpowered to face the hard realities of existence, death seems to be the only door-way whereby to evade the dark conditions prevailing in life and escape into the eternal peace and rest.

This, in fact, is a very wrong notion. The physical body acts as a fortress *par excellence* for the soul. The disembodied soul becomes a helpless victim to all sorts of painful attacks, particularly in the vital world. It is far better and more courageous to retain the body, and boldly face the adversities of life, endeavouring inwardly to win over them than to think of escaping through death. Truly speaking, one should sincerely try to attain the inner calm and peace in life itself.

The Mother says, "Death is not at all what you believe it to be. You expect from death the neutral quietness of an unconscious rest. But to obtain that rest you must prepare for it."[2] It is only by rising above desires and attaining a spirit of detachment that one can expect to have a peaceful death.

It is noteworthy that the progress of the soul is possible only during our life in the terrestrial existence in the physical body, and that there can be no progress after death till the soul's reincarnation on earth.

[1] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 113.
[2] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1964, p. 97.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Can Death be Conquered?

"There is a means to attain physical immortality and death is by our choice, not by Nature's compulsion. But who would care to wear one coat for a hundred years or be confined in one narrow and changeless lodging unto a long eternity?"[1]

Will it be at all possible for the ever growing Godhead imprisoned in the inconscience of Matter to finally triumph over death? In fact, a much greater power than that of death can alone vanquish death. And it is only the supreme Truth and Love that has this supreme Power.

"O Death, if thou couldst touch the Truth supreme
Thou wouldst grow suddenly wise and cease to be."[2]

Again —

"Love's golden wings have power to fan thy void:
The eyes of love gaze starlike through death's night,
The feet of love tread naked hardest worlds.
He labours in the depths, exults on the heights;
He shall remake thy universe, O Death."[3]

Now, ignorance and falsehood, suffering and death are the natural outcome and resultant of the basic inconscience. So, to conquer death, the very Inconscient must be conquered as well. The Spirit has deliberately plunged in this bedrock of obscurity with a view to conquering it, so that ignorance may be transformed into Knowledge, falsehood into Truth, suffering into Bliss of the Spirit, and death into Immortality. This is the great adventure of the Spirit in Space and Time to conquer the Impossible.

Now, the instrument and vehicle of the Supreme must prepare himself and make himself capable of coping with death. The crux of the matter is the problem of transformation. It is the transformation of the dark inconscience of Matter into the luminous Consciousness of the Spirit. And since the very beginning of creation, this work of transformation has been going on by way of gradual evolution of the secret Godhead which had got itself involved in the very heart of the Inconscience in order to accomplish this apparently impossible task.

Up till now, death has been the sovereign ruler exercising full command over our life. From the mighty emperor to the humblest of creatures, everybody has to submit to the irrevocable but impartial Law of the Lord of Death.

[1] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 124.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), p. 663.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 592.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Man, with all his vanity for the astonishing achievements in Science and Technology, and a pronounced sense of superiority regarding his unique position in the creation and his latent power and capacity, still proves to be no match for the fiat of death.

So, it is evident that to conquer death man must exceed his consciousness — his original animal consciousness — and grow into superman having an active connection with the supramental world or the world of Truth-Consciousness. It is not the ruler of empire but the Self-ruler, not the outstanding Scientist but the full-fledged Yogin that can try to wage a war against death. And naturally, as the Mother has said, of all the elements in man — mental, vital and physical — the physical will be the last to change. In fact, as she observes, "It is a race between Transformation and Decadence, because there are only two things that could be the final points for judging as to how far one has succeeded: either success, that is to say, become a superman — when one can naturally say, 'Now I have reached the result' — or death. Till that one is normally on the way."[1]

So it is clear that the coming superman will be able, by the very force of his consciousness, to keep his body immune from disease and decay no less than suffering, and prolong his life at will. Only by his own choice and will to leave the physical frame can there occur his body's death. That is to say, the superman will have a complete mastery over Matter and Nature. The Lord of Death and the forces of inconscience will have finally to submit to the Power of the Spirit.

"For in the march of all-fulfilling Time
The hour must come of the Transcendent's will:
All turns and winds towards his predestined ends
In Nature's fixed inevitable course
Decreed since the beginning of the worlds
In the deep essence of created things:
Even there shall come as a high crown of all
The end of Death, the death of Ignorance."[2]

If the substance of the body becomes very flexible and ethereal it can be changed at will, and there can be no question of death. It is only by the supramental power that this radical transformation of the material substance is possible. So it appears that only the supramental being, having a purely spiritual birth and origin, can be absolutely free from the present necessity of changing the body by the method of death. "The supramental body which has to be brought into being here has four main attributes: lightness, adapta-

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1959, p. 75.
[2] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), p. 708.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

bility, plasticity and luminosity."[1] This body made out of some luminous substance will act at the same time as the physical vesture which can be changed and remade whenever it is needed. Therefore, it is only with the coming of the supramental being that the procedure through death will be overcome altogether. And along with death will also be conquered the dark Inconscient itself at its very root. And the earth will experience for the first time the spontaneous joy of everlasting day, and the throbbing delight of All-Life.

Conclusion

"Shall I accept death or shall I turn and wrestle with him and conquer? That shall be as God in me chooses. For whether I live or die, I am always."[2]

THE IDEAL OF ECONOMICS IN THE NEW AGE

SPEECH BY ABHIJIT GUPTA

In our times economics has become a great power, mighty in its dominance and complex in its character. It is the various branches of economic activity which today control our life. If we look forward we shall have no doubts about its important role in the future, that is, in the New Age which is to come. It is not possible to determine the exact forms it will take, but one can firmly state that a radical change will come about in our attitude towards it. For the moment, let us leave out the structural part and fix our attention on the central issue, that is: what will be the ideal of economics in the New Age?

Economics is closely associated with money and wealth and therefore it is necessary to study the attitude of men towards them. A retrospective view will reveal to us that throughout the ages there have been two main attitudes towards money and wealth.

1) There have been people who considered money and wealth to be the most important and indispensable elements of life. They thought that a successful life must be a clear example of accumulating more and more wealth. But unfortunately, trying to possess wealth, they turned out to be its slaves rather than masters.

2) There have been others who held a diametrically opposite view and considered wealth to be the most abhorrent and even sinful thing. They

[1] *Words of the Mother*, Third Series (1951), p. 84.
[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 124.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

thought money and wealth pull man down towards inferno and in order to attain salvation one must have an attitude of total rejection. This was the denial of the ascetic.

In the present age where there is almost an insatiable hunger and craving for wealth, people are not likely to practise asceticism. They prefer to follow the motto of Charvak:

Yāvajjīvet sukhaṁ jīvet
Ṛṇaṁ kṛtvā ghṛtaṁ pibet.

(As long as you live, live happily.
Borrow money and drink 'ghee'.)

It is of course true that credit is not a very encouraging prospect in this age of law courts. But the fact remains that ours is a commercial age. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Commercialism is still the heart of modern civilisation."[1] Today man lives with the sole purpose of becoming prosperous. Our whole civilisation has turned out to be a phenomenon of commercial give and take and a blind slavery to money.

With the overwhelming development of industry and trade, commercialism has also grown fast and gripped our world entirely. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Industry and trade are now five-sixths of social life and economic principle the governing principle of society."[2]

Trade and commerce by themselves are not things to be condemned or treated with disdain. They are important elements which help to fulfil the needs of life and give a more ample scope to our development. But when commerce and wealth become idols of worship, there comes a degeneration and civilisation turns into barbarism. A barbarian is one in whom there is no inner awakening to any idealism and this can be said quite accurately of the average man of today. He has no noble aim or ideal to attain, his only goal is to become more and more prosperous by devoting his entire life to the quest for and accumulation of wealth. Speaking of this commercial barbarism Sri Aurobindo says: "This economic barbarism is essentially that of the vital man who mistakes the vital being for the self and accepts its satisfaction as the first aim of life. The characteristic of life is desire and the instinct of possession ... the vitalistic or economic barbarian makes the satisfaction of wants and desires and the accumulation of possession his standard and aim."[3] For the present commercialist an ideal man is not a cultured one but one who has been successful in the economic field of

[1] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 82.
[2] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 470.
[3] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 72.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

life. Such is the grip of economics on modern man. "Even in the outlook on knowledge, thought, science, art, poetry and religion the economic conception of life overrides all others."[1] Sri Aurobindo describes the commercialist vividly: "To arrive, to succeed, to produce, to accumulate, to possess is his existence."[2]

Today, a man who is above the average is confronted with two extreme attitudes, and the age-old question, "To be or not to be?" haunts his mind: Whether to be amidst money and be pulled down by it, or to remain totally aloof from its "vicious contact" as the ascetics put it. He ponders hard and finally finds a middle path: "Neither too much of Bhoga, nor too much of asceticism," says he, "let me remain safe in the midway."

Neither this middle path nor the two extremes are the right attitudes according to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

Wealth and money and all other material possessions have to be used in the right manner so that they may help us in our progress towards a greater ideal and not hinder or turn out to be obstacles. In its origin money is a divine power which has come down on the earth to help mankind. Sri Aurobindo says, "In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine. But like other powers of the Divine it is delegated here and in the ignorance of the lower Nature can be usurped for the uses of the ego or held by Asuric influences and perverted to their purpose."[3]

For this reason, in the hands of commercial men, money turns out to be a power that degenerates life and puts an end to all progress. Because of this, many spiritual paths insist on a detachment from and a renunciation of all bondage to wealth; some even go to the extent of enjoining a life of poverty, thinking that bareness and poverty of life are the only true spiritual conditions. This is a wrong attitude, for "Poverty is no more a necessity of social life than disease of the natural body."[4] Sri Aurobindo gives us the right attitude by stating, "You must neither turn with an ascetic shrinking from the money power, the means it gives and the objects it brings, nor cherish a rajasic attachment to them or a spirit of enslaving self-indulgence in their gratifications. Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service."[5] He also tells us that in our personal use of wealth and money we should not have any demand but should accept happily what the Divine Mother gives us and use it for her purpose. In this there is a joy, a joy of directing, organising and channelising the money power so as to obtain the minimum waste and the maximum result. This

[1] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 464.
[2] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 72.
[3] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 11.
[4] *Thoughts and Aphorisms* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 103.
[5] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 12.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

is so often translated in the material field through the crude principles of profit and loss and an insatiable desire for gaining more and more to hoard, accumulate and possess till the last breath of life. But the essential joy has its glorious manifestation when we consider ourselves as trustees and become scrupulous, exact and careful to the minutest detail, knowing well that all wealth belongs to the Divine and we are merely the instruments of its channelisation.

Wealth and all material possessions are important elements, for through them the Divine Power will manifest upon earth. Thus discarding the two extremes of asceticism and commercialism and even the so-called middle path, we have to develop an entirely new outlook towards wealth and all material possessions. In the building of the New Age the Master's prophetic utterance must be our mantra:

"In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision."[1]

CREATRIX OF A NEW AGE

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The Mother, the creatrix of a new age of consciousness, is not— as a Soul, as a guiding divine puissance — a newcomer to this earthly scene. She has had her past incarnations, who by their divine collaboration with Sri Aurobindo have assisted the growth of the earth-consciousness, in different epochs of world history. But in those past epochs earth was not ready for her final and full manifestation; so she revealed herself partly, as superhuman womanhood, as a great queen, as a great beauty, as a great God-lover. But now at the dawn of a new age of supramental creation she has manifested herself as the Divine Mother herself, for, without her the great descent of the supramental Truth is not possible, and without this great descent her total revelation cannot become a fact. So long she was working from behind a veil; so long she fought the powers of Ignorance from behind the cloak of a human name or through the disguise of a saint or a queen, which were her masks. But Sri Aurobindo tore that mask and revealed the godhead behind. In him she found her total

[1] *The Mother* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 25), p. 14.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

epiphany and he on his part revealed himself fully due to her power of manifestation.

But born amid the circumstances of 'birth, fate and change', conditioned by ignorance, the Mother, the supreme deity, nevertheless felt the same stroke of darkness which a human takes for granted as a natural concomitant of this terrestrial existence. To her this birth must have meant a great decline and an unparalleled distress. But she, the Eternal World Mother, bears unique love for her children in Time; hence she condescends to wear this mask and endure this cross, to raise them up, to reveal a path of self-fulfilment and transformation. The Mother records her feeling of suffocation under human conditions as a child. Although she grew up as a common child, the consciousness that she bore within was not human. And it is this consciousness which goes to make the entire difference. To the normal child, growth is a series of wonders, experiments, learnings and a slow manifestation of acquired or latent possibilities; but to the Mother it was a lesson in human conditions, in the human pattern of life and human development, which was entirely different to her soul which had to become accustomed to human ways, not for anything else but for the sap of experience which enriched her soul and made her ready for the life and ordeal ahead.

With girlhood years came a greater growth of the 'Flame'. The Mother had a vivid premonition of her future role as the leader of humanity. What was latent in her childhood as instinctive groping became a conscious aspiration. For an ordinary girl these are years of emotional unrest, intellectual seeking and the growth of the personality. But to her they proved a significant period of self-discovery and self-expression. Music became the expression of her soul's aspiration, the expression of her true self of felicity. Painting came to her as the revelation of form, of beauty, of harmony and as the expression of the aesthetic being in terms of colour, composition and line. Formal knowledge visited her with its information, system, logic and classification, moulding her brain, giving coherence to her instrument of thinking, which is so necessary in a world which comprehends things in terms of intellectuality. She grew proficient in household craft, not because this was needed for the future but because the Divine when it manifests uses the human instrument to its fullest extent and exploits the human ways as a total ground of manifestation and the seizing of the totality of man's existence. Thus this becomes a ground of expression on the one hand and a mode of self-veiling on the other. The Divine comes close to us, assumes a human garb which is only a camouflage; all its powers, emanations, influences it shuts away completely, so total is the masking. It does not seek to amaze us with feats of miracles which man takes as singular pointers to divinity. Rather it seeks to show us a path of slow progression (from the point of view of the Divine) for man to follow. A miracle is no solution to any human problems or ills. Hence to

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

learn the ways of humanity, the Mother learnt to perfection the ways of expression, the ways of comprehension, the ways of analysis and the path of growth. But the indwelling divinity often expressed itself in all these ways. And, in fact, whatever she did bore this secret God-touch which made her work different from the work of her fellow-beings in its intrinsic value as well as in method of execution.

The Mother then naturally turned towards the learning of occultism, the human way of entry into the verities of the spirit. This experiment confirmed her intuitive and inborn knowledge about the worlds designated as supra-terrestrial. Later this knowledge became a realisation as she leaned towards yoga.

Yoga as a conscious process or as an intuitive path had been known to her since her childhood; later it became a developed path of self-perfection. But ordinarily what takes a man a lifetime took her a few years. She became slowly conscious of her mission on earth and of Sri Aurobindo as a great spiritual being somewhere on the earthly scene.

Meanwhile to complete her human education she entered into a matrimonial alliance, as was done in the past by Chaitanya, Mirabai, Buddha, Ramakrishna and also by Sri Aurobindo. Matrimony is an important phase of human existence and one who was the World-Mother incarnate must bear the mortal pangs of matrimony and child-bearing to acquaint herself at first hand with the experience of this human phase.

Prayers and Meditations of the Mother records poignantly the meeting between Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It was not a romantic rendezvous. It was a meeting of two spirits one in essence, but divided in manifestation for the purpose of their special mission. Sri Aurobindo poetically records this meeting in his epic *Savitri*, in the Book of Love, where, if we exclude the legend and outer circumstances of the poem, we get the true essence of the meeting of the two souls. After their meeting Sri Aurobindo's yoga took a new turn of development. The Mother's quest (the quest of Savitri) was over. The results became externally perceptible in two ways. First, the publication of the *Arya* with its new foundation of knowledge, new approach and new vision in the realms of philosophy, yoga, sociology, history, poetry and a host of other subjects. Second, the growth of the Ashram as a nucleus of spiritual seekers. To put it in external terms: the Mother became the dynamic and living agent to manifest Sri Aurobindo's realisations. His thoughts, ideas, doctrines and researches in yoga she formulated in action, in visible vehicles. Here in this sphere her past experiences and developments in the human ways became useful. A new light appeared amidst the few sadhaks that had flocked around the Master and it gave their life a new meaning, value and orientation.

But we must not surmise that all her existence was without difficulties,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

troubles, problems and setbacks. In fact, humanity and human conditions are beset with limitations. It is these that visited the Mother with redoubled vigour, because she had come to establish a new harmony, she was the leader of the evolution. She faced all the attacks of ignorance, of ill-will, of ingratitude, of insincerity and inertia. They came from the world-atmosphere and from some of those who failed to accept her as the Divine Mother, or else fostered doubts, or bore ill-will, or were callously antagonistic to her and her workings. They came to her as difficulties which she had to surmount; as hindrances to her calling down a greater light into the earth-consciousness; they even invaded her as physical illnesses.

Of this condition Sri Aurobindo has repeatedly spoken in his poems, specially in *Savitri*. It is the necessary fate of the incarnate Divine. History records many a tale of callous ingratitude and baseness. The Redeemer and the Saviour have always to suffer greatly for their singular sacrifice to incarnate themselves as man; so it was with the Mother, so it was with Sri Aurobindo.

Thus the labour of the two divine collaborators was filled with immense difficulties. And at every step the goal seemed to withdraw further. And it seemed at one moment that the descent of the Supermind into the terrestrial consciousness might take a very long time indeed. So the problem was of indefinite delay or the adoption of an extreme method to hasten this descent and change the entire existing conditions. At this juncture the Master took upon himself to withdraw voluntarily from his material envelope as a holocaust. This literally took the Kingdom of Heaven by storm. The supramental light, which had long been descending but somehow could not be fixed in the body, came down and surcharged the body of Sri Aurobindo as he lay in state after his passing. And a new power began its swift work from a centre in the Mother's physical consciousness. But the Mother, as a result of Sri Aurobindo's self-sacrifice, was left alone in the material field. The future of her mission and the fate of the world lay now entirely with her. We, human beings, cannot conceive of this ordeal, which became most acute owing to the decisive conflict brought on between the protagonists of darkness and the newly descended light whose leader she was. To those who seek to understand fully the Mother's condition, we may suggest the reading of Books Seven to Ten of *Savitri*.

In 1956 at last the new light which had been directly working so far in the individual consciousness entered directly the general atmosphere of the earth as a universal force. This marked the second and more decisive stage of Supermind's terrestrial action. The first stage, concerned with the individual human body, can be termed a descent; here now was a suffusion, however subtle, on a world scale and it may be distinguished, in the Mother's words, as a manifestation.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

From now onwards as the light increased, the struggle too became more acute — because what the Mother aims at is the entire divinisation of the human constitution and thus a reversal of what man normally is. As a pioneer of this new creation she has to work over every inch of the ground, each element of the consciousness, each part of the nature. The struggle now is to change the very fibre of the body. The new light works in her physiological system, in her very cells, awaking a new consciousness, a new energy and a new birth in them. The process is on the way, a way of which no man has yet any glimpse. The barriers are many; the difficulties we cannot even gauge with our limited human comprehension. But the Mother continues her action upon the very material basis of her body, urging it to change, to become a conscious receptacle of the supramental illumination. Thus with her as the golden nucleus, we are marching towards a new dawn of perfection.

Meanwhile the Mother's hold and influence on men and nations and on world conditions is steadily increasing. Her power is there working in men's egoism, their littlenesses, their basenesses, their habits and their unwillingness to change. The disturbance, disharmony in the world's affairs are outer signs of the opposition to her working. The disturbance and chaos mean that nations are not yet ready to change, or to submit their egos to a higher power. And until they submit to her light, the struggle will continue.

We stand at the crossroads of history. There is one light with us, it is the Mother. None else can show us the way, can lead us; none else is there who can uplift us; all human efforts, human ways, human leaderships have failed. The ego of the nations, the ignorance of the mass of humanity are leading man to his doom. It seems that man does not want to be saved. But amid all this chaos and disharmony there is she who is not only the light to all who have flocked around her but is the guiding Power of the entire world. In her is the key that saves, the light that wakes, the sun that discovers and transforms. She is the creatrix of the new age to come.

Studying her life on earth, we learn that there is no end to the growth of man; there is no end to perseverance, there is no end to realisation; there is no end to self-giving and to humility. This is the goal of which the Mother is the embodied symbol.

"The superman shall wake in mortal man
And manifest the hidden demi-god
Or grow into the God-Light and God-Force
Revealing the secret deity in the cave.
Then shall the earth be touched by the Supreme.
His bright unveiled Transcendence shall illumine
The mind and heart, and force the life and act
To interpret his inexpressible mystery

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

In a heavenly alphabet of Divinity's signs.
His living cosmic spirit shall enring,
Annulling the decree of death and pain,
Erasing the formulas of the Ignorance,
With the deep meaning of beauty and life's hid sense,
The being ready for immortality,
His regard crossing infinity's mystic waves
Bring back to Nature her early joy to live,
The metred heart-beats of a lost delight,
The cry of a forgotten ecstasy,
The dance of the first world-creating Bliss."[1]

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Delight of Works

In thy works there are always these three, the Master, the Worker and the Instrument. To define them in oneself rightly and rightly to possess them is the secret of works and of the delight of works.

Learn thou first to be the instrument of God and to accept thy Master. The instrument is this outward thing thou callest thyself; it is a mould of mind, a driving force of power, a machinery of form, a thing full of springs and cogs and clamps and devices. Call not this the Worker or the Master; it can never be the Worker or the Master. Accept thyself humbly, yet proudly, devotedly, submissively and joyfully as a divine instrument.

There is no greater pride and glory than to be a perfect instrument of the Master.

Learn thou first absolutely to obey. The sword does not choose where it shall strike, the arrow does not ask whither it shall be driven, the springs of the machine do not insist on the product that shall be turned out from its labour. These things are settled by the intention and working of Nature and the more the conscious instrument learns to feel and obey the pure and essential law of its nature, the sooner shall the work turned out become perfect and flawless. Self-choice by the nervous motive-power, revolt of the physical and mental tool can only mar the working.

Let thyself drive in the breath of God and be as a leaf in the tempest; put thyself in His hand and be as the sword that strikes and the arrow that leaps to its target. Let thy mind be as the spring of the machine, let thy force be as the shooting of a piston, let thy work be as the grinding and shaping

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), pp. 705-6.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

descent of the steel on its object. Let thy speech be the clang of the hammer on the anvil and the moan of the engine in its labour and the cry of the trumpet that proclaims the force of God to the regions. In whatever way do as an instrument the work that is natural to thee and appointed.

The sword has a joy in the battle-play, the arrow has a mirth in its hiss and its leaping, the earth has a rapture in its dizzy whirl through space, the sun has the royal ecstasy of its blazing splendours and its eternal motion. O thou self-conscious instrument, take thou too the delight of thy own appointed workings.

The sword did not ask to be made, nor does it resist its user, nor lament when it is broken. There is a joy of being made and a joy of being used and a joy of being put aside and a joy too of being broken. That equal joy discover.

Because thou hast mistaken the instrument for the worker and the master and because thou seekest to choose by the ignorance of thy desire thy own state and thy own profit and thy own utility, therefore thou hast suffering and anguish and hast many times to be thrust into the red hell of the furnace and hast many times to be reborn and reshaped and retempered until thou shalt have learned thy human lesson.

And all these things are because they are in thy unfinished nature. For Nature is the worker and what is it that she works at? She shapes out of her crude mind and life and matter a fully conscious being.

⁂

Know thyself next as the Worker. Understand thy nature to be the worker and thy own nature and All-Nature to be thyself.

This nature-self is not proper to thee nor limited. Thy nature has made the sun and the systems, the earth and her creatures, thyself and thine and all thou art and perceivest. It is thy friend and thine enemy, thy mother and thy devourer, thy lover and thy torturer, the sister of thy soul and an alien and a stranger, thy joy and thy sorrow, thy sin and thy virtue, thy strength and thy weakness, thy knowledge and thy ignorance. And yet it is none of these things, but something of which they are attempts and imperfect images. For beyond all these it is an original self-knowledge and an infinite force and innumerable quality.

But in thee there is a special movement, a proper nature and an individual energy. Follow that like a widening river till it leads thee to its infinite source and origin.

Know therefore thy body to be a knot in Matter and thy mind to be a whirl in universal Mind and thy life to be an eddy of Life that is forever.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Know thy force to be every other being's force and thy knowledge to be a glimmer from the light that belongs to no man and thy works to be made for thee and be delivered from the error of thy personality.

When that is done, thou shalt take thy free delight in the truth of thy individual being and in thy strength and in thy glory and in thy beauty and in thy knowledge; and in the denial of these things thou shalt take delight also. For all this is the dramatic mask of the Person and the self-image of the self-Sculptor.

Why shouldst thou limit thyself? Feel thyself also in the sword that strikes thee and the arms that embrace, in the blazing of the sun and the dance of the earth, in the flight of the eagle and the song of the nightingale, in all that is past and all that is now and all that is pressing forward to become. For thou art infinite and all this joy is possible to thee.

The Worker has the joy of her works and the joy of her Lover for whom she works. She knows herself to be his consciousness and his force, his knowledge and his reserving of knowledge, his unity and his self-division, his infinity and the finite of his being. Know thyself also to be these things: take thou also the delight of thy Lover.

There are those who know themselves as a workshop or an instrument or the thing worked, but they mistake the Worker for the Master; this too is an error. Those who fall into it can hardly arrive at her high, pure and perfect workings.

The instrument is finite in a personal image, the worker is universal with a personal trend, but neither of these is the Master, for neither are the true Person.

*
**

Know last the Master to be thyself; but to this self put no form and seek for it no definition of quality. Be one with That in thy being, commune with That in thy consciousness, obey That in thy force, be subject to That and clasped by it in thy delight, fulfil That in thy life and body and mentality. Then before an opening eye within thee there shall emerge that true and only Person, thyself and not thyself, all others and more than all others, the Director and Enjoyer of thy works, the Master of the worker and the instrument, the Reveller and Trampler in the dance of the universe and yet hushed and alone with thee in thy soul's silent and inner chamber.

The joy of the Master possessed, there is nothing else for thee to conquer. For He shall give thee Himself and all things and all creatures' gettings and havings and doings and enjoyings for thy own proper portion, and He shall give thee that also which cannot be portioned.

Thou shalt contain in thy being thyself and all others and be that which

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

is neither thyself nor all others. Of works this is the consummation and the summit.

(*The Superman*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 16, pp. 287-90.) SRI AUROBINDO

*
**

POEMS ON SRI AUROBINDO AND ON THE MOTHER

INVOCATION TO SUPERMIND

O height beyond the stature of the mind,
O width outreaching finite heart's embrace,
Poised puissance on the limits of the world,
Enlighten us; we would no more be blind.
We seek ourselves behind each comely face,
And bind the myriad detail sense-unfurled
To one bright spear-point, and therewith we trace
Swift utterance which no thought-fetters bind.
Shining lance, far above rifted woe,
Reveal to earth the ending of thy quest;
When thou to the Holy Logos shall be pressed,
The Hidden Love behind all universe
Sends ruby fire and ever-living flow, —
And night is fading, dreams of self disperse.

(*Poems*, 1941, p. 116.) ARJAVA (J. A. CHADWICK)

*
**

RED LOTUS

(Sri Aurobindo's Consciousness)

That living Lotus, petal by petal unfolding,
Which through the mists of this *avidya* looms,
Vicegerent of the Sun, nowise withholding
The light we lack in *Maya's* nether glooms.

When spirit-sense to the last high peak gyring
Finds all Thy mountain-bud aflame with rose —
Touched by the eager hues of Dawn's aspiring —

CC-Q. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

What raptured Silence watches Thee unclose!

Then the vast span of those Truth-petals reaching
To the utmost arc of Being's finitude
With vibrant answer to dark's wan beseeching
Transforms a world, from Thy grave beauty hued.

O puissant heart amidst whose raptured shrining
A nameless Love is garbed in Name's disguise,
Last metronome to mortal things assigning
A fadeless rhythm wrung from Dawn's echoing skies.

(*Poems*, 1941, p. 177.)

ARJAVA (J. A. CHADWICK)

*
**

THE DUAL APOCALYPSE

What deep, white unimaginable fire broods
Within her frail body's golden citadel!
What puissance sleeps in her sky-tranquil eyes!
What secrecy of God's apocalypse
Is hidden behind her lustrous limbs of peace!
What stupendous love's flame-red magnificence
Blazes within the monument of her soul!
Her flesh is the timeless path of coming Noon;
Her forehead the splendid peak of solar rest:
Yet her steps cross the mire's unholy space;
Her acts follow the fugitive deeds of men,
For her moods mirror the far inscrutable Will.
Her nether zones have touched matter's solid-point
Like a glowing monolith of charm and grace,
Her faultless stature is above the climb of stars;
Her crown reaches the great ultimate seas;
Her roots in earth's primal collosal blank.
She brings to parched desert-lips of somnolence
The burning splendour of the large Beyond,
The glory and rapture of undying release.
For, on her the whole continent of sun
Looms like an avalanche of might supreme.
Rarely the dust descries that matchless gleam
Through the wide spaceless fissure of her gaze.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Rarely our eyes can meet her naked effulgence.
Cloaked behind the momentary cowl of time
She toils with the unbodied eternal Flame
Whose seed is buried in the everlasting gloom,
Whose presence wraps her grand celestial robe.
But when the Apollo from the dormant abyss
Shall awake from his self-chosen couch of death,
The globe rejoice in sapphire ecstasies,
The drum of deathless gods beat in the spheres,
The mother of perennial omnipotence,
Shall stand unveiled beside the emperor-sun.
Their diamond hands shall bless this ancient world.

(*The Golden Apocalypse*, 1953, p. 2.) ROMEN PALIT

⁂

SRI AUROBINDO

All heaven's secrecy lit to one face
Crowning with calm the body's blinded cry —
A soul of upright splendour like the noon!

But only shadowless love can breathe this pure
Sun-blossom fragrant with eternity —
Eagles of rapture lifting, flickerless,
A golden trance wide-winged on golden air.

(*The Secret Splendour*, 1941, p. 60.) K. D. SETHNA

⁂

RISHI

He brought the calm of a gigantic sleep:
Earth's mind — a flicker gathering sudden gold —
Merged with unknowable vistas to come back
A fire whose tongue had tasted paradise.

A plumbless music rolled from his far mouth:
Waves of primeval secrecy broke white

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Along the heart's shores, a rumour of deathless love
Afloat like a vast moon upon the deep.

("*Overhead Poetry*", 1972, p. 48,) K. D. SETHNA

*
**

VITA NUOVA

Haloed by some vast blue withheld from us,
Her pure face smiles through her cascading hair:
Like a strange dawn of rainfall nectarous
It comes to amaranth each desert-prayer.

Beyond themselves her clay-born beauties call:
Breathing the rich air round her is to find
An ageless God-delight embracing all —
The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind.

Across both night and day her secrets run,
For even through our deepest slumberings
We hearken to an embassy of the sun
And stir invisible of rapturous wings.

(*The Secret Splendour*, 1941, p. 65.) K. D. SETHNA

*
**

"SAVITRI"

A rose of dawn, her smile lights every gaze —
Her love is like a nakedness of noon:
No flame but breathes in her the Spirit's calm
And pours the omnipresence of a sun.
Her tongues of fire break from a voiceless deep
Dreaming the taste of some ineffable height —
A cry to clasp the one God-hush in all,
A universal hunger's white embrace
That from the Unknown leaps burning to the Unknown.

("*Overhead Poetry*", 1972, p. 40.) K. D. SETHNA

*
**

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Invocation of The Divine Mother

For her emerald of LIFE
Shakti of God that moves upon the waters,
Greatness and wideness of Spirit everlasting,
From senses, mind and heart, from a myriad moods and quarters
Enter with Thy puissances, transmuting and recasting.

For her topaz of TRUTH-EXISTENCE
Wisdom of God, silent above Time-sources,
Transcendent peak all creature-ken outvasting,
Bring to heaven's roadsteads earth by devious courses,
Calm, ordinant as lodestone though all ways are overcasting.

For her amethyst of the POWER of beauty
Beauty, star-enrobing, a strangeling here
From eldest aeons fraught with overthrow
Of shadowhood, because Thy worshippers draw near,
Once gaze — and then forswear all ease until they know.

For her ruby of REALISATION
Joyhood, earth-englobing, God-victory,
In the east Thy dawn-rose banners faintly show;
Aidant to Love, the spear-hosts sweep from Eternity,
Till Time is heaven-conquered and the dateless bugles blow.

(*Poems*, 1941, p. 335.) Arjava (J. A. Chadwick)

*
**

New Life

I read life's mystery sculptured in thy Face:
Wonder inscrutable, bring close to my sight
The fathomless beauty of thy mortal gaze
Whence leaps the splendour of the Infinite.

The pure and delicate touches of thy hand
Awake an unforgettable ecstasy:
My human heart begins to understand
Thou art the home of all felicity.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Through interminable changes I feel
An unbroken link that draws me near and near
Till on the verge of time Thou shalt reveal
The secret Truth hidden in thy heart's sphere,

And life with golden wings of vision sail
Across the spirit's unnavigated seas,
Dropping this weary earth like a crumpled veil
Upon a shore of sombre memories.

(*Sun-Blossoms*, 1947, p. 1.)

NIRODBARAN

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

16 August 1968 -

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

THE TRUE MEANING OF KARMA

SPEECH BY TARUN VISHNU CHOWDHURY

From very ancient times there has been — in one form or another, in the East as well as in the West — a belief in the law of Karma. And as is usually the case with popular beliefs, several misconceptions have disfigured its true meaning. I propose to rectify briefly some of these in the light of Sri Aurobindo's views on the subject.

People have the idea that the nature of one's actions, or Karma, in the past birth determines the conditions and happenings of his next life. If in his past life on this earth a man has been virtuous, the coming life for him will be successful, prosperous and happy. And if he has committed vile acts, his following birth will be full of misery. Many also believe in the principle of double reward and double punishment. They think that if a man is virtuous, he will, after his death, get all the pleasures in heaven and also lead a very prosperous and happy subsequent life on earth. And, if he is a sinner, then first he will burn in the hot cauldrons of hell and again be a miserable creature in his next birth.

This reduction of the whole action of Karma to a very simple moral law is an extreme simplification of a very deep and complex process. The sole significance of the universe is not the antinomy of good and evil. The universal Spirit is not simply a rigid moralist. The universal Will has a myriad other elements in it which it allows to manifest. This world is not guided by a mere ethical-hedonistic law. As Sri Aurobindo says: "If the soul is passing through an evolution by a many-sided and complex experience, any law of Karma... if it is to fit itself into that experience, must also be complex and cannot be of a simple and exiguous texture or rigid and one-sided in its incidence."[1]

The popular interpretation of the Karmic Law, as I have already mentioned, is an over-simplification of its complex truth. Let us now view this from another angle. The basic idea behind the law of Karma is the action-reaction theory. All actions have their consequences: rather the famous principle of "as you sow, so shall you reap." Now, there are not only moral actions committed by man, but also various kinds of mental, vital and physical ones, which are mostly omitted in the popular notion. Into these categories can be placed a multiple of actions, all of which can have their appropriate results in this or future births. The pursuit of truth, beauty, knowledge, good, etc., can have as an outcome a great development and growth in their own

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 813.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

fields. Similarly, the pursuit of ignorance will more and more engulf one in a great ignorance.

Let me explain this point by providing an example. Suppose X is a man of very high morals, but, and this 'but' is of cardinal importance, he is also a very tamasic and cowardly person. Now the popular complaint is: why is X not rewarded by worldy prosperity? But people tend to forget that even the simplest interpretation of the Karmic Law would mean that each action would have its appropriate consequence. The high ethical pursuits of X are liable to get rewarded by a natural happiness, a sunny felicity, a purity and a poise in him. But an indulgence in tamas and cowardice can by no means bring worldly prosperity. If it did, then it would be an injustice on the part of universal Nature. But it can so happen that a man is very tamasic in his present life and yet he enjoys a formidable wealth. We can arbitrarily say that in his past birth he was a very active and hard-working man and at present he is cashing-in on his past balance of sincere labour. But, of course, this is a very narrow and misleading view of the whole phenomenon.

It is held by many that the law of Karma is the determinant and the governor of the evolution of the life and soul in the universe. Let us see what Sri Aurobindo has to say about this: "A law or chain of Karma is only an outward machinery and cannot be elevated to a greater position as the sole and absolute determinant of the life-workings of the cosmos, unless the cosmos is itself entirely mechanical in its character.... But all is not Law and Process, there is also Being and Consciousness; there is not only a machinery but a Spirit in things, not only Nature and law of cosmos but a cosmic Spirit, not only a process of mind and life and body but a soul in the natural creature. If it were not so, there could be no rebirth of a soul and no field for a law of Karma."[1] If in our essential being we are the Spirit and not a machinery, and if our soul determines its own path in evolution, then the law of Karma is only an instrument of the soul for the purpose of evolution. Our Self is greater than its Karma.

In this connection a question may arise in some inquiring minds: whether rebirth is necessary for the working of Karma and also whether Karma is needed for rebirth. Says Sri Aurobindo, "These two things are the soul side and the nature side of one and the same cosmic sequence."[2] Both are quite indispensable to each other. If we believe in the evolution of the soul through repeated births we must accept that there is a link between successive lives. "The past of the soul has an effect on its future; and that is the spiritual essence of the law of Karma.... This evolution is not possible if there is not a connected sequence from life to life, a result of action and experience, an evolutionary consequence to the soul, a law of Karma."[3]

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), pp. 807-808.
[2] *The Problem of Rebirth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 153. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Before taking a new outward personality, the soul decides about the acceptance or elimination of the effects of Karma. Whatever it feels necessary it accepts and whatever it considers useless it discards. The soul has the final word, Karma is only its instrument.

There are many who doubt the truth of rebirth. One of their main reasons for not believing in it is the absence of memory of the Karma of previous lives. To convince people of the phenomenon of rebirth is not my task here. But I would like to mention a few points. Even in our present life we do not remember so many happenings of our childhood and also other periods. But that does not mean that we are not the same persons as we were in our infancy. The memory of previous lives is absent from our surface mind, because our soul takes up a new mental, vital and physical personality. The psychic, no doubt, retains the memory of the essence of the experience of past lives but as it is not in contact with our surface being, we naturally do not remember anything of our past lives. And as a matter of fact the absence of memory of our preceding births is a boon to us. Here are the Master's own words: "A clear and detailed memory of past lives, hatreds, rancours, attachments, connections would be... a stupendous inconvenience; for it would bind the reborn being to a useless repetition or a compulsory continuation of his surface past and stand heavily in the way of his bringing out new possibilities from the depths of the spirit."[1]

ART AND YOGA

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

Art and Yoga, as ordinarily understood, have nothing common between them. They are worlds apart in value, purpose, and profess widely divergent ideals. This is the usual outlook of the West which the East also is now more and more adopting by contagion, and deeper realities are either forgotten or else ignored. Today there is everywhere a tumult of revolt in the field of art, and values and conditions of art-creation are fast undergoing a rapid alteration, which is a sign of unrest, disequilibrium, a blind urge to discover a profounder truth which the ordinary utilitarian mind fails to realise. Yoga too has gained considerable prominence in the modern world and even in the West it is now not looked down upon as something quaint or unnatural. And yet the gulf between Art and Yoga continues to exist. We shall examine both issues along parallel lines and attempt to discover their meeting-point,

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 819.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

or a point where they become complementary pursuits. For, the opposition between the two is created by a superficial understanding of their true nature and function. We have to go behind and beyond this façade of opposition and discover the inner unity.

Art and Yoga are two expressions of man's urge to exceed the limits of his lower nature. They represent two aspects of his being's attempt to escape the shackles of his animal past by the aid of aesthetics and askesis. This attempt is fundamental because the yearning for transcendence is basic to man's nature; he cannot, at any given stage, remain satisfied with what he is and what he has achieved. That yearning is the key to all progress and perfection.

If we gaze back at our earlier history, we shall discover religion and spirituality to be at the centre of man's art-expression. Religion has urged man to carve statues of anthropomorphical deities, to build temples and cathedrals of worship which symbolised the Infinite by tapering flame-like structures and were abodes of the Eternal Presence. It urged him to paint in fluid and rhythmic lines depicting a Buddha, an epic subject or a love idyll of Krishna. Or else massive but articulate with power, majesty, poise, statues were built by him, representing cosmic Presences, deities and godheads with all their spiritual significance. If we look at Chinese and Japanese paintings, we are struck with the calmness, the serenity, the mystic poise, which the artists deliberately and significantly ingrained in them by singular concentration and inspiration. The effect of Zen Buddhism on Japanese art cannot be underestimated. In India the lore created by *Shilpa Shastra* and *Sadanga* reveals the effect of spiritual vision on art, specially the art of painting. Bharata wrote a voluminous treatise on Indian music, dance and dramatics and the whole opus gives ample evidence of the spiritual influence on Indian art revealing the presence of deep intuitive audition, a perfection of inner harmony and grace which became manifest as *Gram Ragas*, as *Talas*, as *Mudras*, as the intricate pattern of tones, notes, rhythms and physical movements: all of these had behind them a cosmic or soul character.

In the West the spiritual accent is less marked. There the form has ruled. In sculpture, painting and both sacred and secular architecture the western artist unlike his eastern brother followed the outer model, be it in Greece in the time of Pericles or in Italy of the Renaissance. But now the West has discovered the meaninglessness of mere form divorced from the truth of spiritual substance behind: the modern revolt in the guise of Impressionism, Dadaism, Expressionism and in various other forms is the most obvious result of this discontent. India too, having lost for long her spiritual heritage in her external life, follows on the heels of this western insurgence, oblivious of the greatness of her past legacy and its potentiality for future creation.

This shows that it is the presence of spirituality that gives to art its

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

highest character, substance and value. And the acquisition of spiritual vision and outlook require a conscious effort: the effort of Yoga. The revolt in art today is there because the artist has lost trace of his soul, his deeper being of truth; he has forgotten the legacy of askesis, of the inner quest, of the profound spiritual realisations that stand behind all lasting creation.

The process of art creation has three elements: the original source of inspiration, the dynamic life-force which gives it intensity and form and the outer transmitting instrumental nature of the artist. The common artist is unconscious of the various subtle planes from which the inspiration comes. His sensitive nature draws inspiration from a plane of consciousness to which his unawakened and unchanged nature has the most affinity. Sometimes there is a block and the inspiration ceases to flow. But the artist, driven by his urge, pursues his course, creating trivial painting, meaningless poetry, and worthless works of art in general. Sometimes he strives to create something unique, but his lack of capacity to open to a greater source of inspiration compels him to produce something futile and insignificant. But had he purified his life and emotional elements, silenced his mind, and consciously and deliberately opened to a greater range of consciousness, the inspirational surge would have swept over him like a tidal wave and his process of creation would have been an intense delight and the result highly significant.

The dynamic life-force imparts its living impetus to the inspiration. It is also this life-principle whose conversion to a greater life of the spirit enhances the progress in Yoga. The common artist is ignorant of this part of his psychological formation and the role it plays in his artistic venture. Often he is driven by impure elements of pride, ambition, his desire to gain esteem by some extravagant device, such as creating something odd, bizarre, or likely to bring him notoriety. He may have a *penchant* for the grotesque, or his lower nature may crave for satisfaction by lewdness and obscenity. All these cloud the creator in him and he fails to produce something noble or of value.

Inspiration and the life-force by themselves are not sufficient to effect a great creation. The artist's outer nature must also be a perfect instrument for transmitting them into effective expression. This instrumental perfection includes mastery over the technique, the language, the keen sensibility of the ear and the eye and all other things that are essential for art creation.

The path of Yoga is initially a path of self-purification. With art as a means of widening the range of our consciousness, we can make Yoga an adventure of both purification and creation. For art lifts us up into the higher planes of luminous felicity and the dry and fruitless periods of yogic askesis become luminous with the touch of light, of sweetness and harmony.

Thus, instead of approaching the Spirit with a cold, austere and dry attitude, one can approach it with joy, sweetness and beauty, through art. Of

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

course, it must not be concluded that the approach through art is the only possible path. We are here only attempting to show the fallacy of some of the popular misconceptions. In fact art has been a path of self-dedication in the past. The rock-temples of Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh, Sirigiya, the temples of Konarak, Khajuraho, and at various other innumerable places all over India, all reveal man's attempt to unveil the secrets of the Spirit with the chisel, the brush, the mason's tools, as the medium. He has left behind his discoveries ingrained in rock, in murals, which yet live on as a music that is born in his soul and a dance that is an outflowering of the eternal rhythm.

If the artists who produced these works had harboured any other motive than self-dedication, their works would have revealed something base or common, instead of the intense devotion and sincerity they breathe and the height of achievement they bring to us.

The motive of art is self-expression and the aim of Yoga is self-discovery. But a true and authentic self-expression is not possible unless there is behind it some element of self-unfoldment. Can it be said then that all great artists were great Yogis? Well, it cannot be denied that dissipation, aimlessness, frivolousness have never been the basis of great creation. There has always been sincerity, concentration and entire dedication to art, which are also elements of Yoga. Only it is the motive which causes the difference.

The motives in art have undergone radical changes from epoch to epoch. The earliest motives have been the religious and the spiritual, which have given us great epics, great sculptures and great works in all other spheres of art. The Renaissance banished religion as the motive in art, enthroned life in its place, altering the whole turn of artistic creation. And moving in the same stream of trend, in modern times we made "art for art's sake" our fulcrum of artistic endeavour. This made art personal and intimate. At the same time it gave the artist unlimited license which he often abused and which resulted in poor or indifferent creation. This abuse became more prominent due to the common man's looking up at the artists as a race apart who deserved special privileges and whose faults were always condoned. Their motives were considered to be beyond question and their way of existence always unique. The result of this attitude has been that hedonism, carelessness, shallowness, irresponsibility have now become the hall-mark of the artist's character. He obliges humanity by offering it his trivial works which he produces either for commercial gain or to satisfy his caprice. And even if an artist does possess a true talent he now often wastes it for personal gain or achievement. These falsify the true aim of art.

If a Yogi turns an artist, he makes art creation an act of sacrifice. The vastness of the spirit leans down on him and expresses itself in his work. This is the true meaning of the concept of "art for the Divine's sake". It is also true self-expression, for by Yoga a man comes in contact with his soul and his

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

soul finds a receptive instrument for its expression. He has no manifest aim before him, except what comes to him by revelation from his soul and his higher nature. The external world, circumstances, ways and changes do not affect him. He is not like the common artist moving on the waves of his unsteady passions, moods or sentiments, his violent likes and dislikes, but, calm and open to a greater source, he manifests and expresses what comes to him from within or from above.

Today the world of art is in a chaos. That is because the artists have lost trace of deeper realities and higher truths. External revolts will not bring in the genuine change; what is needed is some fundamental change in the consciousness of the artist himself. He is seeking without what he should seek within. If the artist really turned to Yoga, a new possibility would become manifest with its vision, its intensity, its variety and truth. The Yogi on the other hand need not shun any artistic venture. On the contrary his Yoga can become a direct path, a highway of light, the road to Beauty. He learns to become the worshipper of the Divine in His aspect of Beauty which is one of His essential aspects, for the Divine reveals Himself as Beauty in the physical world.

We have before us two supreme examples of this truth. The Mother has made music and painting a revealing channel of luminous experience. In fact all her life is one great and harmonious art-expression of the Spirit. Sri Aurobindo has made poetry and literature vibrant mediums to embody the large, opulent and thrilling accents of the Spirit. Therefore we cannot say that Yoga and Art are contrary elements. They can become the complementary aspects of the same aspiration: an urge for perfection which is also an urge for beauty.

HOW TO KNOW AND EXPRESS THE TRUTH?

SPEECH BY HENNING CHRISTENSEN

The Truth we are seeking to know is in essence the same for everybody, but the ways of approaching it can proceed along many different lines; so also the ways of expressing it can be through a richness of diversity.

This world, as it is, is a manifestation of a divine Truth which is capable of throwing itself out into a multitude of possibilities and variants of itself, every one of which is different from the others. This differentiation has a purpose; Sri Aurobindo says: "it is a means of greater unity, not as in the egoistic life a means of divisions; for we enjoy by it our unity with our other

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

selves and with God in all, which we exclude by our rejection of his multiple being."[1] This kind of unity is a higher and a more comprehensive one than an exclusive absorption into a state of pure, featureless unity far away from all the multiplicity, which also, we must not forget, is the Divine. On the other hand, why should the Divine Being take so much trouble and pains to develop this world through a slow process of evolution, if this exclusive kind of unity were his intention? No, it cannot be so, the fulfilment of His work must be to enjoy and to participate in the large possession and the bliss of His universal being. This is our *raison d'être*, this is the fulfilment of our individuality.

Our aim is simultaneously to be aware of Oneness in Multiplicity and to see Multiplicity as an expression of the One. By this integral experience we live in Truth, in Immortality; we must attain to the highest without blotting ourselves out from the cosmic existence. God has the liberty of expression and of freedom from expression and because we are a part of Him we too can attain to the same divine self-possession. The harmony of these two tendencies is the condition of all life that aims at being really divine. Either of these two modes of being by itself is a limitation and an ignorance. In order to live in the Truth we must embrace both of them.

This Truth is the supreme Reality of things on which all these innumerable and finite relativities depend for their existence and without which nothing could be.

Because we are a part of this Divine Being, somewhere in our own being we must possess this Truth as a divine spark and to know it must be our sole occupation. The discovery of this soul, the secret psychic entity, the divine element within us, is the first indispensable necessity. And once discovered, we must make our psychic being our guide because it spontaneously knows the Truth, the good and, by its own law and working, is able to lead our life and being towards spiritual completeness.

The Mother has said: "Each element has to manifest as perfectly as possible its own law, what it should be in the whole, in order to do to the maximum what it has to do. It is therefore the conscious, illumined, one might almost say disinterested discovery of the truth of each being that is for him the first, the most important necessity."[2]

How do we achieve this in our life?

First of all the will to discover the Truth of our being and to unite with it must always be living, always present behind all that we do, all that we experience, all that we think. By maintaining throughout a courageous will, sooner or later we shall see all our difficulties melt and vanish before the radiant consciousness of Truth.

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 18), p. 371.
Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, April 1961, p. 31.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Another equally important thing to have is sincerity. Without sincerity how can we hope even to know what is truth and what is falsehood? We must acquire a sharp sense of discrimination. "And the surest way to have discernment," says the Mother, "is a conscious, willing and as total a surrender as possible to the Divine Will and Guidance. Then there is no risk of making a mistake or taking false lights as the true ones."[1]

The Mother has also shown us four indispensable conditions by which we can know the Divine Will:

"The first essential condition — an absolute sincerity.
"The second — overcome desires and preferences.
"The third — silence the mind and listen.
"The fourth — obey immediately when you receive the order."[2]

The first condition we have already mentioned. The next is: to surmount our desires and our preferences. How are we to do this? Once again the Mother's advice can help us:

"One must have an aspiration burning in the being, like a constant fire and each time you have a desire, a preference, an attraction, you must throw it into the fire. If you do that persistently, you will see that a little flicker of true consciousness begins to take birth in your ordinary consciousness."[3]

The third condition is to make our mind completely silent, because only in silence we can hear the little, tiny voice of Truth that is trying to make itself heard from the depths of our psychic being. It is indispensable to get rid of all kinds of desires, preferences, prejudices, prejudgments and preconceptions, because it is exactly these things that drag us down into the lower consciousness and imprison us with their narrow barriers of rigidities. Only when we live a unified and an harmonious life centred round our soul by not having two masters in one house and thereby leading a double life, can we hope to catch the Truth. If we have succeeded in establishing this silence throughout all our being then, indeed, we have the best possible conditions for hearing the little, tranquil voice that speaks from our heart's silence.

The last condition needs hardly any explanation. If we do not obey the impulsion we receive from our psychic being, then the first three conditions must somehow or other be flawed or imperfect in their application, and most certainly there is a lack of sincerity.

It should be carefully noted that as long as the seeker after Truth is still

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1962, p. 51.
[2] *Ibid.*, August 1965, p. 41.
[3] *Ibid.*, November 1963, p. 29.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

living in the ignorance he cannot avoid following in some measure a certain standard of conduct, a dharma; but this standard should be free from the ordinary notions of morality, because moral concepts and Truth are very far from each other. Each sadhak must find the plastic means and instruments for his own development.

Then, after many years of practical endeavour, when everything has become, as Sri Aurobindo expresses it, "self-determined by truth of consciousness and truth of being, there can be no standard, no struggle to observe it, no virtue or merit, no sin or demerit of the nature. The power of love, of truth, of right will be there, not as a law mentally constructed but as the very substance and constitution of the nature and, by the integration of the being, necessarily also the very stuff and constituting nature of the action.... Once that is done, the need of standards of virtue, dharmas, disappears; there is the law and self-order of the liberty of the Spirit, there can be no imposed or constructed law of conduct, dharma. All becomes a self-flow of spiritual self-nature, Swadharma of Swabhava."[1]

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

"I have never known any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of the world-affairs to fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it."

October 1932 — SRI AUROBINDO

(*On Himself*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 26, p. 55.)

*
**

"I have not been discouraged by what is happening, because I know and have experienced hundreds of times that beyond the blackest darkness there lies for one who is a divine instrument the light of God's victory. I have never had a strong and persistent will for anything to happen in the world — I am not speaking of personal things — which did not eventually happen even after delay, defeat or even disaster."

19.10.1946 — SRI AUROBINDO

(*On Himself*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 26, p. 169.)

*
**

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), pp. 997-98.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Q: I am disconcerted at what is happenning in the world. Everywhere misery is rampant, people are losing faith in everything and even the intellectuals like Tagore, Russell and Rolland are clamouring for an end of the age. How is it that things should be marching headlong into a quagmire such as this? I sometimes fear that eventually you and the Mother will retire into an extra-cosmic Samadhi leaving the wicked world to sink or swim as best it can. Perhaps that would be the wisest course — who knows?

"A: I have no intention of doing so — even if all smashed, I would look beyond the smash to the new creation. As for what is happening in the world, it does not upset me because I knew all along that things would happen in that fashion, and as for the hopes of the intellectual idealists I have not shared them, so I am not disappointed."

10.8.1933 SRI AUROBINDO

(*On Himself*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 26, p. 165.)

*
**

"It is the Will of the Lord that will be realised — and the sincere people must know that more they are steady and ardent in their faith the more easy and quick will be the Realisation."

6.12.1965 THE MOTHER

(*White Roses*, 1973, p. 125.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

17 August 1969

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE:*

Above all words,
above all thoughts
in the luminous silence
of an aspiring faith
give yourself totally,
unreservedly, absolutely
to the Supreme Lord
of all existences and
He will do of you
what He wants you
to be. With love and blessings
M.

* This message was originally given by the Mother to a sadhak for another occasion. She approved it to be used as her message for this Conference.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

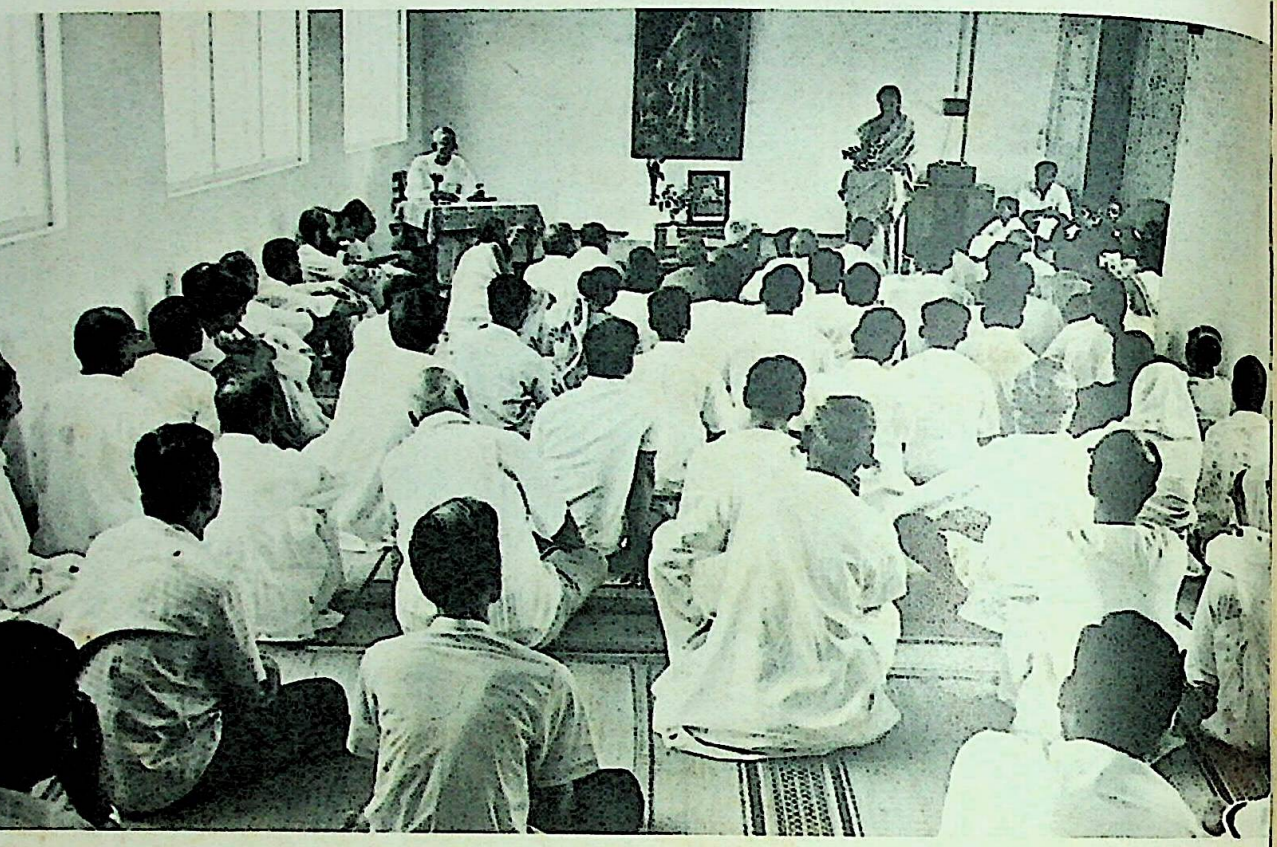
"Above all words, above all thoughts in the luminous silence of an aspiring faith give yourself totally, unreservedly, absolutely to the Supreme Lord of all existences and He will do of you what He wants you to be."

With love and blessings

THE MOTHER

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri



THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
16 August 1970

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

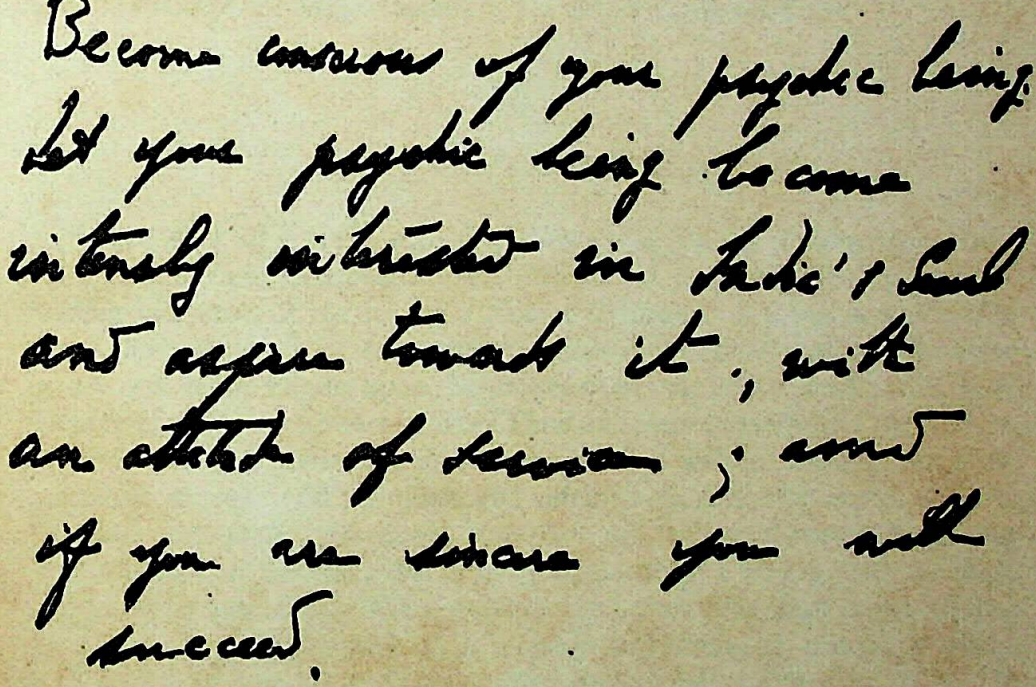
16 August 1970

SUBJECT APPROVED BY THE MOTHER:

"India of Sri Aurobindo's Dream"

THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: You have said in one of Your messages:
"The number one problem for India is to find back and manifest her soul."
How to find back India's soul?



"Become conscious of your psychic being. Let your psychic being become intensely interested in India's Soul and aspire towards it, with an attitude of service; and if you are sincere you will succeed."
15.6.1970

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

INDIA OF SRI AUROBINDO'S DREAM

READINGS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Awakening Shakti of India

"India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples. And that which must seek now to awake is not an anglicised oriental people, docile pupil of the West and doomed to repeat the cycle of the occident's success and failure, but still the ancient immemorable Shakti recovering her deepest self, lifting her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to discover the complete meaning and a vaster form of her Dharma."

(*The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 14, pp. 380-81.)

*
**

India's Will for the Future

"For after all it is the will in the being that gives to circumstances their value, and often an unexpected value; the hue of apparent actuality is a misleading indicator. If the will in a race or civilisation is towards death, if it clings to the lassitude of decay and the laissez-faire of the moribund or even in strength insists blindly upon the propensities that lead to destruction or if it cherishes only the powers of dead Time and puts away from it the powers of the future, if it prefers life that was to life that will be, nothing, not even abundant strength and resources and intelligence, not even many calls to live and constantly offered opportunities will save it from an inevitable disintegration or collapse. But if there comes to it a strong faith in itself and a robust will to live, if it is open to the things that shall come, willing to seize on the future and what it offers and strong to compel it where it seems adverse, it can draw from adversity and defeat a force of invincible victory and rise from apparent helplessness and decay in a mighty flame of renovation to the light of a more splendid life. This is what Indian civilisation is now rearising to do as it has always done in the eternal strength of its spirit."

(*Ibid.*, p. 31.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Mother India

"Mother India is not a piece of earth; she is a Power, a Godhead, for all nations have such a Devi supporting their separate existence and keeping it in being. Such beings are as real and more permanently real than the men they influence, but they belong to a higher plane, are part of the cosmic consciousness and being and act here on earth by shaping the human consciousness on which they exercise their influence. It is natural for man who sees only his own consciousness individual, national or racial at work and does not see what works upon it and shapes it, to think that all is created by him and there is nothing cosmic and greater behind it."

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 22, pp. 424-25.)

*
**

The Rising Sun of India's Destiny

"They must have the firm faith that India must rise and be great and that everything that happened, every difficulty, every reverse must help and further their end. The trend was upward and the time of decline was over. The morning was at hand and once the light had shown itself, it could never be night again. The dawn would soon be complete and the sun rise over the horizon. The sun of India's destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world. Every hour, every moment could only bring them nearer to the brightness of the day that God had decreed."

(*Beadon Square Speech*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 2, p. 28.)

*
**

The Eternal Land of Great Souls

"There are many who, lamenting the by-gone glories of this great and ancient nation, speak as if the Rishis of old, the inspired creators of thought and civilisation, were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men and in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice an error. Ours is the eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness may be overclouded but never, even for a mo-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

ment, utterly cease. The hero, the Rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born."

(*Rishi Bankim Chandra*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 344.)

*
**

The Ideal of the Resurgent India

"A Nation is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity....

"Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity — this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity: 'The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India are essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim.'

"We say to the nation: 'It is God's will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India's eternal life and nature....'

"We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, the world's work, God's work: 'You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First, therefore, become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual pre-eminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world.'"

(*The Ideal of the Karmayogin*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 2, pp. 16-21.)

*
**

India and the Future of Humanity

"The present era of the world is a stage of immense transformations. Not one but many radical ideas are at work in the mind of humanity and agitate its life with a vehement seeking and effort at change; and although the centre of the agitation is in progressive Europe, yet the East is being rapidly drawn into this churning of the sea of thought and this breaking up of old ideas and old institutions. No nation or community can any longer remain psychologically cloistered and apart in the unity of the modern world. It may even be said that the future of humanity depends most upon the answer that will be given to the modern riddle of the Sphinx by the East and especially by India, the hoary guardian of the Asiatic idea and its profound spiritual secrets. For the most vital issue of the age is whether the future progress of humanity is to be governed by the modern economic and materialistic mind of the West or by a nobler pragmatism guided, uplifted and enlightened by spiritual culture and knowledge. The West never really succeeded in spiritualising itself and latterly it has been habituated almost exclusively to an action in the external governed by political and economic ideals and necessities; in spite of the reawakening of the religious mind and the growth of a wide-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

spread but not yet profound or luminous spiritual and psychical curiosity and seeking, it has to act solely in the things of this world and to solve its problems by mechanical methods and as the thinking political and economic animal, simply because it knows no other standpoint and is accustomed to no other method. On the other hand the East, though it has allowed its spirituality to slumber too much in dead forms, has always been open to profound awakenings and preserves its spiritual capacity intact, even when it is actually inert and uncreative. Therefore the hope of the world lies in the re-arousing in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision and power of organisation under the insistent contact of the West and in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident, no longer in forms that are now static, effete, unadaptive, but in new forms stirred, dynamic and effective.

"India, the heart of the Orient, has to change as the whole West and the whole East are changing, and it cannot avoid changing in the sense of the problems forced upon it by Europe. The new Orient must necessarily be the result either of some balance and fusion or of some ardent struggle between progressive and conservative ideals and tendencies. If, therefore, the conservative mind in this country opens itself sufficiently to the necessity of transformation, the resulting culture born of a resurgent India may well bring about a profound modification in the future civilisation of the world. But if it remains shut up in dead fictions, or tries to meet the new needs with the mind of the school-man and the sophist dealing with words and ideas in the air rather than actual fact and truth and potentiality, or struggles merely to avoid all but a scanty minimum of change, then, since the new ideas cannot fail to realise themselves, the future India will be formed in the crude mould of the westernised social and political reformer whose mind, barren of original thought and unenlightened by vital experience, can do nothing but reproduce the forms and ideas of Europe and will turn us all into halting apes of the West. Or else, and that perhaps is the best thing that can happen, a new spiritual awakening must arise from the depths of this vast life that shall this time more successfully include in its scope the great problems of earthly life as well as those of the soul and its transmundane destinies, an awakening that shall ally itself closely with the renascent spiritual seeking of the West and with its yearning for the perfection of the human race. This third and as yet unknown quantity is indeed the force needed throughout the East. For at present we have only two extremes of a conservative immobility and incompetence imprisoned in the shell of past conventions and a progressive force hardly less blind and ineffectual because second-hand and merely imitative of nineteenth-century Europe, with a vague floating mass of uncertainty between. The result is a continual fiasco and inability to evolve anything large, powerful, sure and vital, — a drifting in the stream of circumstance, a

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

constant grasping at details and unessentials and failure to reach the heart of the great problems of life which the age is bringing to our doors. Something is needed which tries to be born; but as yet, in the phrase of the Veda, the Mother holds herself compressed in smallness, keeps the Birth concealed within her being and will not give it forth to the Father. When she becomes great in impulse and conception, then we shall see it born."

(*Ideals and Progress*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 16, pp. 326-28.)

***

Spiritual Readiness of the Indian Masses

"The people of India, even the 'ignorant masses' have this distinction that they are by centuries of training nearer to the inner realities, are divided from them by a less thick veil of the universal ignorance and are more easily led back to a vital glimpse of God and Spirit, self and eternity than the mass of men or even the cultured élite anywhere else. Where else could the lofty, austere and difficult teaching of a Buddha have seized so rapidly on the popular mind? Where else could the songs of a Tukaram, a Ramprasad, a Kabir, the Sikh Gurus and the chants of the Tamil saints with their fervid devotion but also their profound spiritual thinking have found so speedy an echo and formed a popular religious literature? This strong permeation or close nearness of the spiritual turn, this readiness of the mind of a whole nation to turn to the highest realities is the sign and fruit of an agelong, a real and a still living and supremely spiritual culture."

(*The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 14, pp. 128-29.)

***

The True Unity of the Indian Nation

"After all, the spiritual and cultural is the only enduring unity and it is by a persistent mind and spirit much more than by an enduring physical body and outward organisation that the soul of a people survives. This is a truth the positive western mind may be unwilling to understand or concede, and yet its proofs are written across the whole story of the ages. The ancient nations, contemporaries of India, and many younger born than she are dead and only their monuments left behind them. Greece and Egypt exist only on the map and in name, for it is not the soul of Hellas or the deeper nation-soul that built Memphis which we now find at Athens or at Cairo. Rome

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

imposed a political and a purely outward cultural unity on the Mediterranean peoples, but their living spiritual and cultural oneness she could not create, and therefore the East broke away from the West, Africa kept no impress of the Roman interlude, and even the western nations still called Latin could offer no living resistance to barbarian invaders and had to be reborn by the infusion of a foreign vitality to become modern Italy, Spain and France. But India still lives and keeps the continuity of her inner mind and soul and spirit with the India of the ages. Invasion and foreign rule, the Greek, the Parthian and the Hun, the robust vigour of Islam, the levelling steam-roller heaviness of the British occupation and the British system, the enormous pressure of the Occident have not been able to drive or crush the ancient soul out of the body her Vedic Rishis made for her. At every step, under every calamity and attack and domination, she has been able to resist and survive either with an active or a passive resistance. And this she was able to do in her great days by her spiritual solidarity and power of assimilation and reaction, expelling all that would not be absorbed, absorbing all that could not be expelled, and even after the beginning of the decline she was still able to survive by the same force, abated but not slayable, retreating and maintaining for a time her ancient political system in the South, throwing up, under the pressure of Islam, Rajput and Sikh and Mahratta to defend her ancient self and its idea, persisting passively where she could not resist actively, condemning to decay each empire that could not answer her riddle or make terms with her, awating always the day of her revival. And even now it is a similar phenomenon that we see in process before our eyes. And what shall we say then of the surpassing vitality of the civilisation that could accomplish this miracle and of the wisdom of those who built its foundation not on things external but on the spirit and the inner mind and made a spiritual and cultural oneness the root and stock of her existence and not solely its fragile flower, the eternal basis and not the perishable superstructure?"

(*The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 14, pp. 367-68.)

***

The Dominating Strain of Future India

"One thing seems at any rate certain, that the spiritual motive will be in the future of India, as in her past, the real, originative and dominating strain. By spirituality we do not mean a remote metaphysical mind or the tendency to dream rather than to act. That was not the great India of old in her splendid days of vigour, — whatever certain European critics or interpreters of

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

her culture may say, — and it will not be the India of the future. Metaphysical thinking will always, no doubt, be a strong element in her mentality, and it is to be hoped that she will never lose her great, her sovereign powers in that direction; but Indian metaphysics is as far removed from the brilliant or the profound idea-spinning of the French or the German mind as from the broad intellectual generalising on the basis of the facts of physical science which for some time did duty for philosophy in modern Europe. It has always been in its essential parts an intellectual approach to spiritual realisation. Though in later times it led too much away from life, yet that was not its original character whether in its early Vedantic intuitional forms or in those later developments of it, such as the Gita, which belong to the period of its most vigorous intellectual originality and creation. Buddhism itself, the philosophy which first really threw doubt on the value of life, did so only in its intellectual tendency; in its dynamic parts, by its ethical system and spiritual method, it gave a new set of values, a severe vigour, yet a gentler idealism to human living and was therefore powerfully creative both in the arts which interpret life and in society and politics. To realise intimately truth of spirit and to quicken and to remould life by it is the native tendency of the Indian mind, and to that it must always return in all its periods of health, greatness and vigour."

SRI AUROBINDO

(*The Renaissance in India*, Cent. Ed.,
Vol. 14, pp. 417-18.)

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

22 August 1971

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE:

22.8.71

I have faith and be

sincere

blessings

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

A God's Labour

I have gathered my dreams in a silver air
Between the gold and the blue
And wrapped them softly and left them there,
My jewelled dreams of you.

I had hoped to build a rainbow bridge
Marrying the soil to the sky
And sow in this dancing planet midge
The moods of infinity.

But too bright were our heavens, too far away,
Too frail their ethereal stuff;
Too splendid and sudden our light could not stay;
The roots were not deep enough.

He who would bring the heavens here
Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
And trod the dolorous way.

Coercing my godhead I have come down
Here on the sordid earth,
Ignorant, labouring, human grown
Twixt the gates of death and birth.

I have been digging deep and long
Mid a horror of filth and mire
A bed for the golden river's song,
A home for the deathless fire.

I have laboured and suffered in Matter's night
To bring the fire to man;
But the hate of hell and human spite
Are my meed since the world began.

For man's mind is the dupe of his animal self;
Hoping its lusts to win,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

He harbours within him a grisly Elf
Enamoured of sorrow and sin.

The grey Elf shudders from heaven's flame
And from all things glad and pure;
Only by pleasure and passion and pain
His drama can endure.

All around is darkness and strife;
For the lamps that men call suns
Are but halfway gleams on this stumbling life
Cast by the Undying Ones.

Man lights his little torches of hope
That lead to a failing edge;
A fragment of Truth is his widest scope,
An inn his pilgrimage.

The Truth of truths men fear and deny,
The Light of lights they refuse;
To ignorant gods they lift their cry
Or a demon altar choose.

All that was found must again be sought,
Each enemy slain revives,
Each battle for ever is fought and refought
Through vistas of fruitless lives.

My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
And the Titan kings assail,
But I cannot rest till my task is done
And wrought the eternal will.

How they mock and sneer, both devils and men!
"Thy hope is Chimera's head
Painting the sky with its fiery stain;
Thou shalt fall and thy work lie dead.

"Who art thou that babblest of heavenly ease
And joy and golden room
To us who are waifs on inconscient seas
And bound to life's iron doom?

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"This earth is ours, a field of Night
For our petty flickering fires.
How shall it brook the sacred Light
Or suffer a god's desires?

"Come, let us slay him and end his course!
Then shall our hearts have release
From the burden and call of his glory and force
And the curb of his wide white peace."

But the god is there in my mortal breast
Who wrestles with error and fate
And tramples a road through mire and waste
For the nameless Immaculate.

A voice cried, "Go where none have gone!
Dig deeper, deeper yet
Till thou reach the grim foundation stone
And knock at the keyless gate."

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God's riddle sleep
On the Dragon's outspread wings.

I left the surface gods of mind
And life's unsatisfied seas
And plunged through the body's alleys blind
To the nether mysteries.

I have delved through the dumb Earth's dreadful heart
And heard her black mass' bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
And the inner reason of hell.

Above me the dragon murmurs moan
And the goblin voices flit;
I have pierced the Void where Thought was born,
I have walked in the bottomless pit.

On a desperate stair my feet have trod
Armoured with boundless peace,

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Bringing the fires of the splendour of God
Into the human abyss.

He who I am was with me still;
All veils are breaking now.
I have heard His voice and borne His will
On my vast untroubled brow.

The gulf twixt the depths and the heights is bridged
And the golden waters pour
Down the sapphire mountain rainbow-ridged
And glimmer from shore to shore.

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth
And the undying suns here burn;
Through a wonder cleft in the bounds of birth
The incarnate spirits yearn

Like flames to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss:
Down a gold-red stair-way wend
The radiant children of Paradise
Clarioning darkness's end.

A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.

I shall leave my dreams in their argent air,
For in a raiment of gold and blue
There shall move on the earth embodied and fair
The living truth of you.

(*Collected Poems*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 5, pp. 99-102.) SRI AUROBINDO

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(*In celebration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Aurobindo*)

12 August 1972

SUBJECT GIVEN BY THE MOTHER:

"Sri Aurobindo reveals the future."

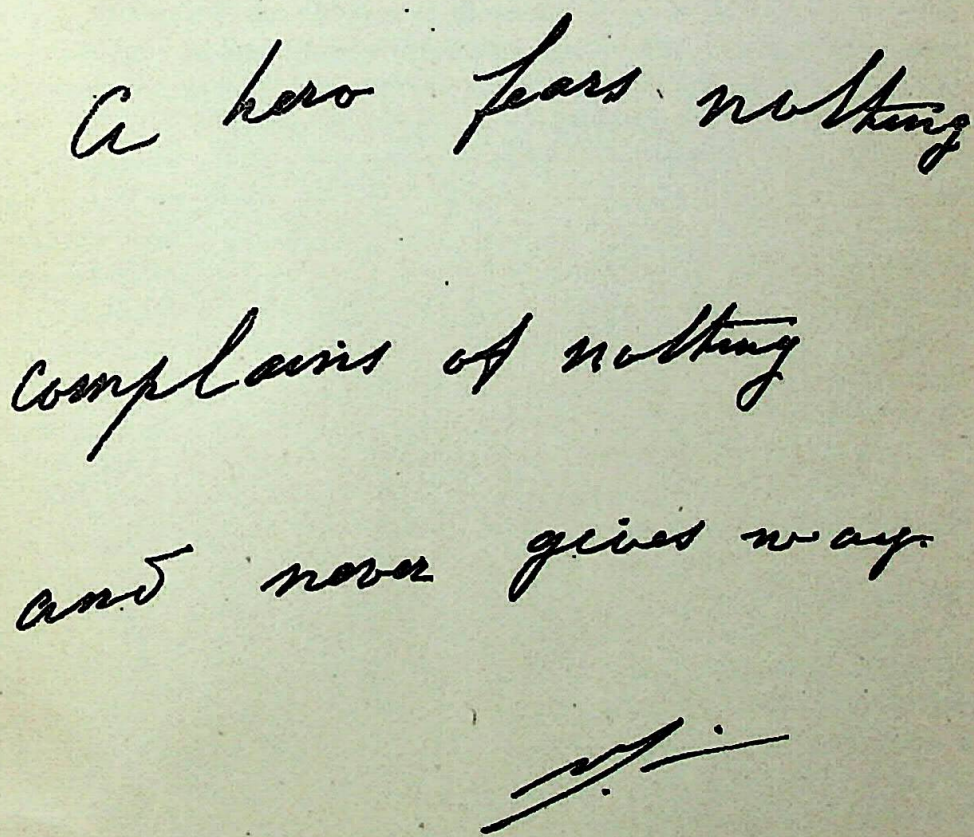
THE MOTHER'S ANSWER:

Q: In Your message of 2 January 1972, you have said:

"In this year of his centenary, his help will be stronger still. It is up to us to be more open and to know how to take advantage of it.

"The future is for those who have the soul of a hero."

Will you please explain what you mean by "a hero" in the above message?



CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

SRI AUROBINDO REVEALS THE FUTURE

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY KISHOR GANDHI

The glorious future of humanity and the world which Sri Aurobindo reveals to us is not of the nature of a philosophic speculation or a poetic imagination or a futuristic dream. Throughout human history, from the most ancient down to the most modern times, philosophers and poets, historians and social thinkers have produced innumerable utopias embodying their speculations and dreams and imaginative hopes of a bright millennium for humanity. Fascinating though they often are to our mind, we are also sadly aware that none of them have fulfilled in concrete result even a fraction of the promise they have held out before mankind.

The point I wish to emphasize is that Sri Aurobindo does not belong to this band of ineffective utopian visionaries. His vision of humanity's future is not a product of intellectual conception or a construction of imaginative fancy; rather, it is derived from a direct and living realisation of the infallible Truth of the Supermind which always carries with it an invincible power of perfect realisation. The supramental Truth, which by its full manifestation will create a New Age in the terrestrial evolution, is not only a self-luminous Knowledge but also a self-determining and self-effectuating Will. For this reason, the promise of a New Age in earth's history which Sri Aurobindo holds out before us is not merely an ingenious theory or a fanciful conjecture but a self-fulfilling Truth-Creation which is the inevitable destiny of mankind.

Sri Aurobindo bent all his energies during his lifetime to bring down and establish this Supermind as an overtly operative power in the earth-nature, and even after his withdrawal from his physical body he has been exclusively concentrated upon this work. As a result, the Supermind in its initial power manifested in the inner regions of the earth on 29 February 1956 and since then has been incessantly pressing forward to emerge fully in the external life of the world. It is the resistance to this pressure which has created acute tensions everywhere in the life of humanity.

At this juncture, when world-conditions have become extremely critical, this year of Sri Aurobindo's birth centenary has a momentous significance, for it marks a decisive stage in the action of the supramental Force for the conquest of the resistance in the earth-nature and in the life of humanity to their inescapable transformation and divinisation. At this moment, it is of the utmost importance for us to hold firmly to our faith in Sri Aurobindo and to remember that he is not merely the *revealer* of humanity's future but also its assured *realiser*. Vision and realisation, which are separated and un-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

equal powers in the mind, become equal and integrated in the Supermind. So the revelation of humanity's future which Sri Aurobindo has given us is bound to translate itself into a perfect realisation. That realisation is not merely a hope but an absolute certitude. To make our faith in this certitude secure we can do no better than to repeat constantly in our mind and heart Sri Aurobindo's own words of mantric potency written in his own hand:

"It is not a hope but a certitude that the complete transformation of the nature will take place."[1]

THE SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

SPEECH BY ANANDA ARYA

The future which Sri Aurobindo reveals to us with his mystic and prophetic vision is not merely a possibility but the inevitable evolutionary destiny of the whole human race. And the changes which are to be accomplished in that future life will not be merely modifications of the conditions of the present life but will require a total transmutation of human nature and consciousness at its very roots. For this reason, one can say that the revelation of the future which Sri Aurobindo brings to us is nothing short of a radical spiritual revolution upturning the very foundations of our life and recreating it in the image of the perfect Truth of the spirit.

Humanity throughout its agelong history has been well acquainted with a series of successive revolutions which have no doubt brought about great changes in the conditions of its life. But the spiritual revolution of which Sri Aurobindo speaks is not in any way similar to the revolutions of the past. It is an altogether unique phenomenon and in this speech it is my intention to dwell briefly upon the unique features of this spiritual revolution as distinguished from the revolutions of the past and also to indicate the necessary conditions for working it out successfully.

The Mother and Sri Aurobindo lay primary stress not on the revolutionary alteration of the external conditions of life but on the change of consciousness itself. They do not deny the necessity of the external modifications but they maintain that it is only the internal change that can bring about any permanent amelioration of the external conditions. So the revolution which the Mother and Sri Aurobindo want to bring about will have an inner orientation, it will break away with the past and invoke a new

[1] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 585.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

movement, a new awakening in man's consciousness and this will be a spiritual revolution for it would emphasise man's inner change as a precondition of the change in the outer life.

Sri Aurobindo says, "The world knows three kinds of revolution. The material has strong results, the moral and intellectual are infinitely larger in their scope and richer in their fruits, but the spiritual are the great sowings."[1]

Obviously, the world has witnessed on many occasions the first two kinds of revolution — the material and the moral and intellectual but the third one, the spiritual revolution, is yet to come. And Sri Aurobindo asserts that until it comes it is difficult to understand and interpret the true sense of even the other present happenings. To put in his words, "The changes we see in the world today are intellectual, moral, physical in their ideal and intention: the spiritual revolution waits for its hour and throws up meanwhile its waves here and there. Until it comes the sense of the others cannot be understood and till then all interpretations of present happenings and forecast of man's future are vain things. For its nature, power, event are that which will determine the next cycle of our humanity."[2]

Once it arrives, it would transform the very stuff of man's consciousness. And going further it would aim at an integral transformation of the mind, the life and eventually of the body and its activities. But in this great endeavour the transformation of the consciousness is the first step that has to be taken. As the Mother says: "But there is a first step, absolutely indispensable, which has to be completed before anything else can be undertaken; it is the transformation of the consciousness... I am not speaking of a simple change in the mental outlook, but a change of the consciousness itself. It is a complete and absolute change, a revolution in the basic poise; it is somewhat like turning a ball inside out. In the changed consciousness everything appears not only new and different, but almost the reverse of what it looked like to the ordinary consciousness."[3]

To bring this change of consciousness in oneself one has to sincerely aspire for it and exert all one's will so that it may be realised. It is truly interesting to note, as the Mother says, that this change of consciousness when it happens is abrupt, it happens all on a sudden, although the preparation for it might be slow and long. To quote her again, "You do not feel that you are changing slowly and gradually from one thing to another, but that you are suddenly awakened or born into the new."[4]

Sri Aurobindo also speaks of this rapid conversion in his book, *The Supramental Manifestation*, where he observes that Nature too on her side tries, "to raise her lower parts by an evolutionary or revolutionary change,

[1] *Thoughts and Glimpses* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 393.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 394.
[3] *Bulletin of Physical Education*, August 1950, p. 9.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

conversion or transformation into the divine reality and it may happen by a process and progress or by a rapid miracle."[1] And he continues, "there can be rapid conversion, quick transformation after transformation, what would seem to our normal present mind, a succession of miracles."[2]

According to Sri Aurobindo a change of this kind "must necessarily be accomplished in the individual and in a great number of individuals before it can lay any effective hold upon the community"[3] or the mass. Therefore, if the spiritual change or in other words the spiritual revolution of which we have been speaking is to be effected, it must, as Sri Aurobindo points out, "unite two conditions which have to be simultaneously satisfied but are most difficult to bring together. There must be the individual and the individuals who are able to see, to develop, to re-create themselves in the image of the Spirit and to communicate both their idea and its power to the mass. And there must be at the same time a mass, a society... which is capable of receiving and effectively assimilating, ready to follow and effectively arrive."[4] And then he adds, "Such a simultaneity has never yet happened, although the appearance of it has sometimes been created by the ardour of a moment. That the combination must happen some day is a certainty."[5]

It is definite that it is the individual who would take the lead in this spiritual revolution. In *The Life Divine* Sri Aurobindo emphatically mentions, "The individual is indeed the key of the evolutionary movement."[6] And he again accentuates the same idea by saying that the ideals of the race are only to be attained "by a revolutionary individual effort."

Regarding the attitude of the pioneering individuals towards life, Sri Aurobindo says: "The thing to be done is as large as human life, and therefore the individuals who lead the way will take all human life for their province. These pioneers will consider nothing as alien to them, nothing as outside their scope. For every part of human life has to be taken up by the spiritual.... In each power of our nature they will seek for its own proper means of conversion; knowing that the Divine is concealed in all, they will hold that all can be made the Spirit's means of self-finding and all can be converted into its instruments of divine living."[7]

The pioneer of this New Race, Sri Aurobindo says, "would feel the presence of the Divine in every centre of his consciousness, in every vibration of his life-force, in every cell of his body.... All beings would be to him his own selves, all ways and powers of consciousness would be felt as the ways and powers of his own universality;... he would be universal but free in the

[1] *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), pp. 43-44.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[3] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 231.
[4] [5] *Ibid.*, p. 232.
[6] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 1050.
[7] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 251.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

universe, individual but not limited by a separative individuality."[1] And "he will not live either for himself or for the State and society, for the individual ego or the collective ego, but for something much greater, for God in himself and for the Divine in the universe."[2]

I would like to conclude my paper by reading a few lines from the Master's epic poem *Savitri* in which he has given us a marvellous description of the great revolutionary change which shall occur in the life of the New World:

> "A soul shall wake in the Inconscient's house;
> The mind shall be God-vision's tabernacle,
> The body intuition's instrument,
> And life a channel for God's visible power....
> A divine force shall flow through tissue and cell
> And take the charge of breath and speech and act
> And all the thoughts shall be a glow of suns
> And every feeling a celestial thrill....
> Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
> The spirit shall take up the human play,
> This earthly life become the life divine."[3]

THE FUTURE WORLD UNITY

SPEECH BY MARIA JAIN

You must be familiar with Sri Aurobindo's Birthday Message of the 15th August 1947, wherein he speaks of his five dreams. Sri Aurobindo calls them "dreams" but in truth they are not dreams in the usual sense of the word. By dreams he means things which appear to the average mind to be impracticable and unrealisable now, in the present conditions, but which are sure to be realised in the future. For instance, let us take his first dream of a free India. When he was dreaming of India's freedom, way back towards the end of the nineteenth century, at that time it seemed impossible, yet it was realised, as it had to be since it was already decreed by the Divine.

Here I will dwell upon his third dream only: his dream of "a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all man-

[1] *The Life Divine* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 19), p. 972.
[2] *The Human Cycle* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 244.
[3] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book XI, Canto 1, pp. 707, 710, 711.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

kind".[1] However impossible this may seem today, it has to become a reality sooner or later. Being the dream of the Lord, it cannot do otherwise. The Divine Will is behind it to assure fulfilment.

In his *Ideal of Human Unity*, Sri Aurobindo tackles this problem in all its aspects. In this paper, I intend to present the main ideas of that work in a brief outline.

Just as after the family came the commune, then the clan or tribe, the small city state and finally the nation (which is the largest unit yet successfully developed by Nature), so logically the next step in Nature's process would be the union of all nations into one world-community. There was, of course, the empire too, but it could not endure because it was never a real unity, whereas the nation was and is.

What then is real unity which alone can create an enduring collective group-life? Let me explain it in reference to the formation of the nation-group.

According to the general conception the important factors required to form a nation are: geographical convenience, common race, language, culture and history. But to Sri Aurobindo these are of secondary importance which only help in the formation of a nation. The main factor is the *psychological feeling* of unity; when a group of people psychologically feel one, only then can a nation be truly formed. And this psychological unity can come only when a nation has a distinct group-soul. It is only then that it is a real and lasting unity. A mere political unity can never survive. Wherever the group-soul is present, the external unity is bound to be realised. The most striking example of this in history is India. Throughout its long history it was never externally united. But because the inner unity was always there, the external one had to come. Nature went on trying to achieve the external political unity through a succession of empires and dynasties. Even then when unity did not come she took the drastic measure of imposing an alien rule.

The British rule united India finally. Even though the psychological inner unity was always there, the outward form of unity took more than two thousand years to realise itself, and even now it is not altogether complete. Greece and Italy also took a long time to achieve unity.

The empires never had any inner psychological unity, nor did they succeed in achieving it; that was why they crumbled down sooner or later.

So if the world-union is to have a permanent durability, it has to have that all-important thing: the psychological feeling of unity among all the nations of the world.

Nowadays some have begun to dream of a social, administrative and political unity achieved through the military force of the State. This might

[1] *Sri Aurobindo on Himself* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 26), p. 405.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

bring about some sort of mechanical unity quickly and effectively, and it could have its temporary advantages: strict organisation, efficiency, security, order and material well-being. But its disadvantages would be disastrous: everything would become mechanical, life would lose its colour, richness, variety, and the individual would be deprived of his freedom and victorious impulse towards creation. Everything would be made standardised and uniform. Thus life would come to a standstill, and finally the whole organisation would lose its vitality and die of an increasing stagnation.

Whenever the individual dwindles, stagnation is inevitable, for on him hangs the fate of collective progress. The individual with his initiative, energy, idealism attempts that which the State has not the wisdom or courage to attempt. The State normally would either leave such things undone or actively suppress and oppose them. How many times has a great personality come and taken mankind by bounds towards progress! Great things have always been done by exceptional individuals, by a Newton, a Napoleon, a Shakespeare, not by the mass. The mass moves slowly while the exceptional individual progresses by leaps and drags the rest in his wake. This is so because the mass-mind is always miles behind the few best individuals; the collectivity only serves as a brake upon such swift progress. Without those bright and brilliant souls, the society would die a slow death. The State with its rigid machinery is bound to eliminate or dwarf these few individual efforts, and thus the necessary correctives to the defects and limitations of the State machine would disappear.

Theoretically, the State idea is the subordination of the individual for the good of the collectivity. (This is what Communism also claims.) Practically, it is his subordination to a collective egoism, to help to seek collective aims and ambitions imposed by a certain number of governing men. They are supposed to represent the collectivity in some way. There is no proof that these men do represent the very best mind and character of the community. In fact, they usually represent the pettiness, selfishness, ruthlessness, self-deception and incompetency of the community. Even if they did represent the noblest aims and highest instincts of the nation, yet the administration is sure to become a gigantic machine which is caught in its own rigid mechanism.

There is yet another reason why the State has no right to suppress the individual. The collectve egoism is far worse than the individual's; the State has no soul, no sense of morality, no ethical conscience, no fear of social opinion or of communal law, because it controls most of these and has absolute power in its hands. "Man within the community is now at least a half-civilised creature, but his international existence is still primitive. Until recently the organised nation in its relations with other nations was only a huge beast of prey with appetites which sometimes slept when gorged or dis-

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

couraged by events, but were always its chief reason for existence. Self-protection and self-expansion by the devouring of others were its *dharma.*"[1] Nowadays it is somewhat better, not because of any growth of the sentiment of unity, but because there is a greater difficulty in devouring. The State's only fear is of defeat and of disastrous economic disorganisation but even these checks are often ineffective.

The State now claims that it is the best means of human progress. This is a fiction. After all, it is only "a machine, without tact, taste, delicacy, or intuition"[2] in its dealings. In the past, in its inner life it was "brutal, rapacious, cunning, oppressive, intolerant of free action, free speech and opinion, even of freedom of conscience in religion".[3] In modern times there has been considerable improvement in some respects. "The State now feels the necessity of justifying its existence by organising the general economic and animal well-being of the community and even of all individuals. It is beginning to see the necessity of assuring the intellectual and, indirectly, the moral development of the whole community."[4] But it still claims to absorb all free individual activities, which is a premature claim, for that can only put an end to human progress.

Thus the strife between the individual and the collectivity has been going on perpetually. But in their true relation both are complementary to each other, both need each other to survive, develop and perfect themselves.

The State should help the individual to grow and expand, remove all obstacles from his path, not hamper him in his progress. But the State machine can never bring about a healthy unity because of its inevitable tendency to artificial uniformity.

And uniformity is a great obstacle to human progress. "The State tends always to uniformity, because uniformity is easy to it"[5] and it brings effective and speedy results. But it also leads to stagnation and death. A national culture, religion and education are useful provided they do not interfere with the growth of the individual; but a State education, religion and culture are unnatural violences. It is right and necessary that education should be *provided* for all by the State, but it should not *control* it and make it a routine. This is the flaw in State-governed education.

Nature always wants rich variety. And this is the point on which Sri Aurobindo lays special stress: unity in variety or diversity in oneness. "Life exists by diversity", the whole "evolution moves through diversity, from a simple to a complex oneness."[6] Life "insists that every group, every being shall be, even while one with all the rest in its universality, yet by some principle or ordered detail of variation unique. The over-centralisation which is

[1] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), p. 280.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 283. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 281. [4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 283. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 490.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

the condition of a working uniformity, is not the healthy method of life. Order is indeed the law of life, but not an artificial regulation. The sound order is that which comes from within, as the result of a nature that has discovered itsel and found its own law and the law of its relations with others. Therefore the truest order is that which is founded on the greatest possible liberty; for liberty is at once the condition of vigorous variation and the condition of self-finding. Nature secures variation by division into groups and insists on liberty by the force of individuality in the members of the group. Therefore the unity of the human race to be entirely sound and in consonance with the deepest laws of life must be founded on free groupings, and the groupings again must be the natural association of free individuals. This is an ideal which it is certainly impossible to realise under present conditions or perhaps in any near future of the human race; but it is an ideal which ought to be kept in view."[1]

Peace, order, well-being and security are all very important for a great world-culture, but variation and freedom of the group and of the individual are equally and even much more important. "Not... a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future."[2]

According to Sri Aurobindo, the external structure of the world-union — political, administrative, economic etc. — can be securely founded only on an inner sense of human unity which must go deeper than even the psychological unity and discover its spiritual source. The eighteenth century ideal of the religion of humanity will not suffice for the purpose because it is only an intellectual creed. Only when it turns into a spiritual aspiration can it fulfil its promise of realising lasting human unity. Such a spiritual religion of humanity, "much more powerful, explicit, self-conscious, universal in its appeal than the nationalist's religion of country" would need "the clear recognition by man in all his thought and life of a single soul in humanity of which each man and each people is an incarnation and soul-form; an ascension of man beyond the principle of ego which lives by separativeness, — and yet there must be no destruction of individuality, for without that man would stagnate;... and sufficient means of expressing all the resultant complex life and growth in a flexible and progressive form of human society."[3]

Sri Aurobindo says that the aim of the intellectual religion of humanity, when it "was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition"[4], was "to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality, and fraternity."[5] None of these has really won as yet. What has been realised is only a political, social and legal liberty and equality. "Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle."[6]

[1] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), pp. 490-491.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 497. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 540. [4 5 6] *Ibid.*, p. 545.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Sri Aurobindo maintains that these three "are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego.... A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature.... Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race."[1]

MAN AND WOMAN IN THE NEW AGE

SPEECH BY ROMEN PALIT

The prophetic vision of Sri Aurobindo is based on the emergence of the superman, not as something bizarre or a short-lived wonder but as a natural outflowering of evolution. Man is still half human and half animal; surely this state cannot be the apex of his becoming or the sign of his final development. History has kept record of his extravagant aspirations and sacrifices, marred by his unimaginable cruelty and singular baseness. He has made magnificent strides in science and technology, but is himself nailed down to the cross of his lower nature, his egoism, his pettiness and sloth. The present chaos is the direct result of the conflict within him: one part

[1] *The Ideal of Human Unity* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 15), pp. 546-47.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

seeking perfection in a greater and greater self-becoming, the other clinging to his past egoism, selfishness, habits of domination, self-assertion. In spite of this we are moving towards a greater age. Sri Aurobindo says, "The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner Spirit and the logic of Nature's process."[1]

In the great move forward, what will be the relation of man to woman, their position, importance, way of life and thinking, specially when family-life in society is undergoing an enormous change? Before we actually examine the issue in the Aurobindonian light, it would be well to glance over the facts at hand so that we could have a background, a *point de départ*, for our theme.

We cannot deny that this is a man-dominated world, in spite of woman's making ample contribution to the enrichment of existence. Man has reduced her into a condition of slavery, of self-annulment for his own profit and interest. Yet she is in no way inferior to him in stamina, courage, intelligence, creativity and strength of character. We have only to turn the pages of history to be impressed with this fact in different walks of life: literature, science, music, arts and crafts, sports and even warfare. She has been the inspiration to poets and artists, as well as to men of action. Negatively, she is blackened as the source of perdition. Sri Aurobindo comments on this attitude, "It arises from the extreme sexuality of men. They see in women *narakasya dvāram*[2] because that door is so wide open in themselves. But they prefer to throw the blame on women."[3]

For over half a century, there has been an upsurge everywhere by women to have equal rights with men, and to be economically, socially and culturally free. This liberation movement is much ridiculed and frowned upon by men. But the external freedom or equality can only come when the sexes have outgrown their cravings to exploit each other and have ceased to make demands on each other. The Mother says that both are slaves. Both man and woman are equal in their mutual slavery. It is only when either can break out of this dependence, this slavery, that one can be free. Till then, both men and women continue to be slaves and superiority or inferiority is only a delusion. Man desires woman for the little comforts and pleasures she brings, for sex and for the sense of possession. Apart from these things woman has no significance to him. Reciprocally woman hankers after a home and security, for children. It is for these satisfactions that she wants him.[4] Such attachments on either side make the sexes mutual slaves barring the way to a purer relationship of love and friendship, without demand. They also stop free growth and progress for both.

[1] *The Hour of God* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 17), p. 7. [2] The gate of Hell.
[3] *Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo* (1969), p. 128.
[4] *See* "The Problem of Women", *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April 1955.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

There is a body of opinion which holds that the difference between man and woman is created by Nature or some Moral Power called God for some definite purpose and, if it were not fulfilled, we would go against the religious fiat, the ethical dogma, the very principle of existence and the laws of Nature.

To begin with, this difference is only external and not essential or psychological. If we probe profoundly enough, we would discover that Nature has made this sex-differentiation because it is a convenient means to fulfil her purpose of maintaining the continuity of species, and in addition she has grafted the sex-impulse and attraction to enhance and further her goal. The Mother says very clearly, "I repeat, it has not been so from the beginning. A zoologist could tell you that there are species which are not at all like that. Nature has tried that means — she has tried many things, she has made two in one, she has made all possible species. She tried in that way, perhaps because it seemed to her more practical."[1] Sex exists for a very utilitarian purpose — the physical continuity of the species. For as yet even in man, the highest so far of Nature's creation, physical immortality is impossible due to the factors of decay, illness and eventual death, which have not been conquered.

Also this difference is not so clearly marked even among human beings. For example, physiology reveals that male traits exist in women and female traits in men. Over- or under-functioning of the ductless glands and heredity produce these traits and even changing over of a man into a woman or *vice versa* is not an impossibility. If we rise to the supraphysical worlds of life, mind or of the Gods this sex-difference is generally non-existent. The Mother says, "in the vital world, it is extremely rare to come across sex difference, the beings there are generally without sex ... there are many divinities who are sexless. Therefore this difference is nothing else than a means of Nature to arrive at her goal.... It is not an eternal symbol."[2] Here the Mother is referring to the crude thing and not to the essence of the truth of which this sex-difference is a base representation. In fact all in this present existence is conditioned by the shadow of Ignorance. The sex-principle in its essence and at the source of things, "takes the spiritual form of the Ishwara and the Shakti and without it there could be no world-creation or manifestation of the world-principle of Purusha and Prakriti which are both necessary for the creation,"[3] says Sri Aurobindo. Not sex but two aspects of the same transcendent and universal principle is at the base of what all men and women are. And sex, along with other deformative principles like pain, death, hatred, is a perversion. Sri Aurobindo says, "Sex is the degradation

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1963, p. 35.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 27.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

of the Ananda-force."

The upward spiritual march of evolution would make it necessary for man and woman to outgrow these limitations if they must live up to the need of the hour. Moreover, as there is the pull from below by the lower nature, there is also the call from above from the higher nature, also the urge of the Spirit behind, to surpass all humanity of the past. Therefore like all other things, the man-woman relationship must undergo a radical change. As yet in truth man and woman are half animal and half human in their passions, desires, hungers and sexual impulse. The Mother says, "Humanity has the sexual impulse that is altogether natural, spontaneous, and, if I may say, legitimate. This impulse will naturally and spontaneously disappear with animality."[1] Sex would then be not a hindrance, a source of passions, but of creative energy and joy when, "Entirely controlled it can be turned into a force of spiritual energy also. This was well-known in ancient India and was described as the conversion of *retas* into *ojas* by Brahmacharya."[2] It is not only sublimation of sexual energy, but a drawing upwards of this, which is commonly spilled and wasted, to be turned into a great psycho-physical force. The result would be an amazing power, stamina and energy in the body, an increase of mental and life faculties, a large outburst of creative and all-embracing illumination. This would be the first step towards rising beyond animality.

The whole aspect of man's and woman's life would undergo a radical change. The war of the sexes would have no cause to exist. The suppression and domination of man by woman or of woman by man, the jealousies, hatreds, petty disharmonies would be things of the past. The lower nature and ego would be replaced by the Divine and Its Will working in men and women. Consequently, "all relations should pass from the vital to the spiritual basis with the vital only as a form and instrument of the spiritual — this means that, from whatever relationship they have with each other, all jealousy, strife, hatred, aversion, rancour and other evil vital feelings should be abandoned, for they can be no part of the spiritual life."[3] That is to say, man and woman would enjoy a purer and more lasting basis of union than common human relationships could ever endow.

Love, as humanity understands it, would change; for now it is mixed with lust, demands, sense of possession and other impurities. Love as commonly understood in modern times in the West is synonymous with sex; this is a gross misunderstanding and total falsehood. Also, true love is not a bargaining, a commerce, it is selfless in essence, and its character is above all lower elements of demands, revolts and strifes. The Mother defines love thus:

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, February 1966, p. 91.
[2] *Letters on Yoga* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 24), p. 1516.
[3] *Ibid.* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 23), p. 804.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

"Love is not sexual intercourse. Love is not vital attraction and interchange. Love is not the heart's hunger for affection. Love is a mighty vibration coming straight from the One, and only the very pure and very strong are capable of receiving and manifesting it."[1] This alters the whole aspect of the question. Further Sri Aurobindo clarifies, "Love would remain, all forms of pure truth of love in higher and higher steps till it realised its highest nature, widened into universal love, merged into the love of the Divine."[2] That is, the link between man and woman would be the Divine, the spiritual power and not a small, personal, limiting and narrow love.

This would mean that the society of the future would undergo a radical change, for man and woman form the components of society and its structure. The family as a unit would have to disappear in the course of time as individuals evolve out of the mental and egoistic types into spiritual beings. As it is, the family unit is dwindling fast due to economic pressure and circumstantial necessity. There is a vast difference between the large family unit, almost feudal in character, existing a century back, and the present tiny family nucleus. If spirituality becomes the base of humanity, the social necessity of marriage as an institution would automatically cease to exist. For man and woman would discard sex and all it entails as a prehistoric and animal legacy that they have outgrown and find no longer necessary. Marriage, if it at all took place, would not be a social ceremony, but a marriage of the souls who were beginning a common existence together, a common adventure of realising the Divine.

All this would be for the élite, the advanced portion of humanity aspiring for a higher existence and truth. The rest, the common mass of men and women, would advance slowly and stumblingly at a snail's pace, continuing their old ways, following the beaten track of habits and precedents, changing very slowly, almost imperceptibly.

Only the élite and vanguard of man and woman, enlightened, changed and reborn, shall be:

> "A dual power of God in an ignorant world,
> In a hedged creation shut from limitless self,
> Bringing down God to the insentient globe,
> Lifting earth-beings to immortality."[3]

[1] *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, November 1963, p. 25.
[2] *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 16), p. 27.
[3] *Savitri* (Cent. Ed., Vol. 29), Book XI, Canto 1, p. 702.

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

READING FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The Supramental Perfection

"The descent of the Supermind will bring to one who receives it and is fulfilled in the truth-consciousness all the possibilities of the divine life. It will take up not only the whole characteristic experience which we recognise already as constituting the spiritual life but also all which we now exclude from that category but which is capable of divinisation, not excluding whatever of the earth-nature and the earth-life can be transformed by the touch of the Supermind and taken up into the manifested life of the Spirit. For a divine life on earth need not be a thing apart and exclusive having nothing to do with the common earthly existence: it will take up human being and human life, transform what can be transformed, spiritualise whatever can be spiritualised, cast its influence on the rest and effectuate either a radical or an uplifting change, bring about a deeper communion between the universal and the individual, invade the ideal with the spiritual truth of which it is a luminous shadow and help to uplift into or towards a greater and higher existence. Mind it will uplift towards a diviner light of thought and will, life towards deeper and truer emotion and action, towards a larger power of itself, towards high aims and motives. Whatever cannot yet be raised into its own full truth of being, it will bring nearer to that fullness; whatever is not ready even for that change, will still see the possibility open to it whenever its still incomplete evolution has made it ready for self-fulfilment. Even the body, if it can bear the touch of Supermind, will become more aware of its own truth, — for there is a body-consciousness that has its own instinctive truth and power of right condition and action, even a kind of unexpressed occult knowledge in the constitution of its cells and tissues which may one day become conscious and contribute to the transformation of the physical being. An awakening must come in the earth-nature and in the earth-consciousness which will be, if not the actual beginning, at least the effective preparation and the first steps of its evolution towards a new and diviner world order.

"This would be the fulfilment of the divine life which the descent of Supermind and the working of the truth-consciousness taking hold of the whole nature of the living being would bring about in all who could open themselves to its power or influence. Even its first immediate effect would be on all who are capable the possibility of entering into the truth-consciousness and changing all the movements of the nature more and more into the movements of the supramental truth, truth of thought, truth of will, truth in the feelings, truth in the acts, true conditions of the whole being even to the

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

body, eventually transformation, a divinising change. For those who could so open themselves and remain open, there would be no limitation to this development and even no fundamental difficulty; for all difficulties would be dissolved by the pressure of the supramental light and power from above pouring itself into the mind and the life-force and the body. But the result of the supramental descent need not be limited to those who could thus open themselves entirely and it need not be limited to the supramental change; there could also be a minor or secondary transformation of the mental being within a freed and perfected scope of the mental nature. In place of the human mind as it now is, a mind limited, imperfect, open at every moment to all kinds of deviation from the truth or missing of the truth, all kinds of error and openness even to the persuasions of a complete falsehood and perversion of the nature, a mind blinded and pulled down towards inconscience and ignorance, hardly arriving at knowledge, an intellect prone to interpret the higher knowledge in abstractions and indirect figures seizing and holding even the messages of the higher intuition with an uncertain and disputed grasp, there could emerge a true mind liberated and capable of the free and utmost perfection of itself and its instruments, a life governed by the free and illumined mind, a body responsive to the light and able to carry out all that the free mind and will could demand of it. This change might happen not only in the few, but extend and generalise itself in the race. This possibility, if fulfilled, would mean that the human dream of perfection, perfection of itself, of its purified and enlightened nature, of all its ways of action and living, would be no longer a dream but a truth that could be made real and humanity lifted out of the hold on it of inconscience and ignorance. The life of the mental being could be harmonised with the life of the Supermind which will then be the highest order above it and become even an extension and annexe of the truth-consciousness, a part and province of the divine life. It is obvious that if the Supermind is there and an order of supramental being is established as the leading principle in earth-nature, as mind is now the leading principle, but with a sureness, a complete government of the earthly existence, a capacity of transformation of all upon their level and within their natural boundaries of which the mind in its imperfection was not capable, an immense change of human life, even if it did not extend to transformation would be inevitable."

THE END

SRI AUROBINDO

(*The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, Cent. Ed., Vol. 16, pp. 47-9.)

सुरभारती भवन वेद वेदाङ्ग प्रशिक्षण
वाराणसी।
आगत क्रमांक..... 1433 .....
दिनांक..... 11/12/80 .....

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

Errata

Page	*Line*	*For*	*Read*
11	17	effor	effort
32	32	इंन्द्रियाणां	इन्द्रियाणां
53	41-42	bichotomy detween	dichotomy between
88	16	वोद्धव्यं	वोद्धव्यं वोद्धव्यं
89	36	कार्य	कार्यं
91	27	गुरु	कुरु
125	19	omec	come
129	8	arc	are
137	1	sympthises	sympathises
138	22	भूविष्ठां	भूयिष्ठां
179	22	inperceptibly	imperceptibly
194	8	Wes tand	West and
294	18	quite	quiet
296	22	Neverthleess	Nevertheless
339	8	mpersonal	impersonal
341	29	inelutcable	ineluctable
460	19	appearant	apparent
474	18	are	are ready
486	11	up	up to
523	2	possibility	the possibility
551	24	euolutionary	evolutionary
601	23	awating	awaiting
619	3	itsel	itself

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

केन्द्रीय भारत वेद वेदांग विद्यालय
ग्रन्थालय
आगत क्रमांक-4065
दिनांक.....

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri

CC-0. Mumukshu Bhawan Varanasi Collection. Digitized by eGangotri